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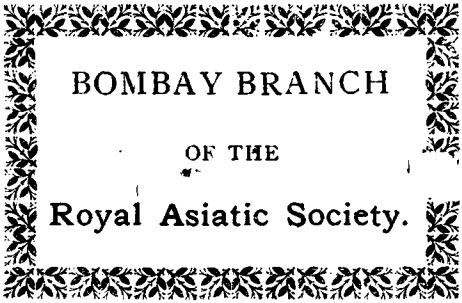

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BYWAYS
IN
BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

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BYWAYS
IN
BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

BY

WALTER JOHNSON, F.G.S.

AUTHOR OF *FOLK-MEMORY*, ETC.

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PREFACE

THE following chapters, though superficially presenting the appearance of disconnected essays, really possess a strong bond of continuity. Running through the whole, implied, where not actually expressed, will be found an insistence on the principle which, in a former work, I ventured to call folk-memory. This folk-memory—unconsciously, for the most part, but sometimes with open ceremony—keeps alive those popular beliefs and practices which are individually called survivals. With some of these legacies from the past the present volume deals.

To a large extent the studies are connected with the church and churchyard. The sections which treat of pagan sites, orientation, and burial customs, embody the results of observations relating to some hundreds of buildings in all parts of England and Wales. The chapters on "The Folk-Lore of the Cardinal Points" and "The Labour'd Ox" partially, at least, break virgin soil. In "The Churchyard Yew" are set down inferences drawn from many years of investigation, the literary side of which has been rendered difficult by the existence, in various modern works, of unfounded statements and hypothetical references. The remainder of the book treats of somewhat more familiar themes, though it is hoped that fresh outlooks are suggested.

Since some of the matters here brought forward have been, and indeed still are, provocative of keen, and even heated controversy, to anticipate agreement with all the conclusions would be sheer folly. Nevertheless, it may be claimed that the facts collected have been carefully sifted, the references conscientiously verified, and the opposing theories honestly presented.

To the multitude of friends who have rendered true service either by supplying information or in preparing the illustrations, most grateful thanks are expressed. Acknowledgements of all such help are recorded in due place, but special recognition must be made of the expert assistance of Mr Sydney Harrowing, who has borne the chief burden in illustrating the volume. To Miss Nora Mansell thanks are tendered for the drawing of Gumfreston church (Fig. 26). Fig. 93 is copied from a sketch prepared by Mr C. G. Carter, of Louth. Messrs Frank Cowley and F. J. Bennett, F.G.S., have kindly permitted the reproduction of an original painting (Fig. 87). Mr Worthington G. Smith, F.L.S., has courteously allowed Figs. 59 and 60 to be taken from *Man, the Primeval Savage*; Fig. 80 is copied by the consent of Professor R. S. Lull; and Figs. 4, 22 and 88 appear by the kindness of Mr David Sydenham, the Rev. Percival Saben, M.A., and the British Archaeological Association respectively. Dr W. Heneage Legge and Messrs G. Allen and Sons have granted the use of the block for Fig. 92, while Figs. 84 and 85 were photographed from a horseshoe lent by the Rev. Hastings M. Neville, B.A., of Ford, Northumberland.

Many of the photographs were taken by Mr Edward Yates, who allowed free choice to be made from his large collection, but the following ladies and gentlemen have also assisted: Mr O. F. Bailey, Mr Alexander Barbour, Mr J. G. V. Dawson, Mr E. W. Filkins, Miss Truda Hutchinson, Mrs W. Johnson, Mr A. L. Leach, F.G.S., Mr Douglas Leighton, Mr P. McIntyre, F.G.S., Mr Llewellyn Treacher, F.G.S., Mr W. C. Walker, Mr E. C. Youens, Mr G. W. Young, F.G.S., F.Z.S., and Mr W. Plomer Young. Permission to use photographs has also been granted by Mr James Cheetham of Lewes, Messrs Thos. B. Latchmore and Son, Hitchin, Mr W. Wiseman, Corfe Castle, the *Grimsby Telegraph* Company, and the Watford Engraving Company.

W. J.

January, 1912

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ERRATUM

Page 399, line 21. For *taxa* read *taxo*.

CHAPTER I

CHURCHES ON PAGAN SITES

MANY years ago, the commanding position which the village church frequently occupies forced itself upon the attention of the writer. As will be shown hereafter, the builders, for some cogent reason, which may yet be determined, chose a spot having considerable natural advantages with respect to strength and security, and there they erected their temple. These geographical observations would not alone have been sufficient to evoke a general theory, had not other facts gradually come into view. One of these facts was the frequent association of the church with earthworks, tumuli, and similar relics of antiquity, and it was this conjunction which raised the inquiry whether the relative positions could, in all cases, be merely accidental. A closer and more prolonged study, involving much personal investigation, together with a review of many isolated fragments of archaeological literature, led to the conclusion, almost irrefutable, as it now appears, that many of our churches stand on pagan sites. A secondary deduction from the observed facts was the probability that, in some cases, there has been almost continuous site-occupancy since the first Christian church was reared.

During the inspection, numbers of records, based on imperfect knowledge or on speculations of the earlier antiquaries, have had to be discarded; in other instances the test has been successfully borne. The presentation of the evidence, with its length of detail, may be somewhat wearisome to the reader, who may, however, console himself with the thought that he has escaped at least a moiety of the mass which has been winnowed.

Furthermore, one may recall the truth set forth by Professor E. B. Tylor when apologizing for wealth of detail in stating a case: "The English mind, not readily swayed by rhetoric, moves freely under the pressure of facts[1]." One may, for a moment, arouse interest by a new hypothesis, but it is only by the accumulation of facts that public opinion is perceptibly influenced in the end.

Viewed strictly, every Christian church was originally built on a pagan site, but we will limit the meaning of the adjective so that it shall apply to those churches which were erected, not on virgin soil, but on some spot once devoted to heathen worship, whether beneath a roof or under the open sky. This definition would narrow the scope of the inquiry; nevertheless, to arrive at a clear decision we shall have to survey the whole question from pre-Roman times onward.

Our path will be greatly cleared if we recognize, and remember—what is too commonly forgotten—that there was a Christian church in Britain long before the mission of Augustine in A.D. 597. Apart from legends, and documents of doubtful authenticity, some writers claim to have proved that British Christianity was well developed before the close of the second century of our era[2]. Other authorities assert that the evidence for the second century is unhistorical, and that the first genuine reference to Christians in Britain is made by Tertullian (c. A.D. 208)[3]. However this may be—and the question of the exact date of the introduction is foreign to our present study—there is unanimity as to the existence of a strong British Church soon after the death of Constantine (A.D. 337). It is even stated that, at the date just mentioned, Britain was as fully Christian as any country in Europe[4]. At any rate, it is beyond dispute that, in A.D. 314, the British Church was represented at the Council of Arles, in France, by

[1] E. B. Tylor, in the preface to the second edition of *Primitive Culture*, 1873.

[2] T. Hodgkin, *Hist. of Eng.* (Vol. I. of *Polit. Hist. of Eng.*, ed. W. Hunt and R. L. Poole), p. 76; E. Conybeare, *Roman Britain*, 1903, p. 258.

[3] R. Camber-Williams, in *Social England*, ed. H. D. Traill, 1894, I. p. 37, and F. T. Richards, same volume, p. 29.

[4] T. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* p. 76; Conybeare, *op. cit.* p. 259. Cf. W. E. Addis, *Christianity and the Roman Empire*, 1893, p. 48.

three bishops, together with a priest and a deacon[1]. Certain writers go further, and contend that, before Britain was cut off from the Empire, the Church had a vigorous corporate life of its own[2]. How long this organization endured, and to what extent it was weakened or shattered by the shock of the Teutonic invasion, are more debateable subjects. It is possible, however, that a remnant of churchmen survived to greet the advent of Augustine[3]. This only must be said, that the existence of any continuity of Christian tradition, however slight, might render the task of deciding what is a pagan site more difficult. Under the influence of an unbroken tradition, churches might be constantly rebuilt on the old foundations; hence, if this assumption be made, additional testimony would be necessary in order to establish the theory that any original structure was set up by the heathen. If such evidence were lacking, the successive buildings would simply strengthen the hypothesis of continuity of Christian worship, but would leave untouched the problem of heathen sites.

The first problem to be attacked, then, concerns the existence of Christian churches during the Roman period, and the after-history of such buildings. Do any of these churches remain to us? The available evidence seems to show that, in outlying districts, at least, churches were constructed of wattle, and, of these structures, not a wrack could possibly have persisted until the present day. In the cities, more durable materials, limestone, flint, chalk, and baked tiles, would be employed, and there is some likelihood that portions of buildings so constructed would successfully resist the ravages of vandals and the fury of storms. Now, it is singular that the churches which will least stand the critical test of the architect and the antiquary with respect to a Roman origin, are precisely those which the popular vote declares to belong to that period. The churches thus misunderstood are those which have large quantities of undoubted Roman materials built into their walls. The catalogue

[1] Conybeare, *op. cit.* p. 259; O. M. Dalton, *Guide to the Early Christian and Byzantine Antiquities* (Brit. Mus.), 1903, p. 3, and many other writers.

[2] See Conybeare, *op. cit.* p. 267, and his authorities.

[3] O. M. Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 2.

is of formidable length, but may be soon dismissed after a few typical examples have been noticed. The walls of the cathedral church of St Albans contain abundance of Roman material, and a continuity of buildings, dating from the Roman occupation, has therefore been hastily assumed. Bede, it is true, relates that a church was built over the grave of St Alban at Verulam[1], and it is possible that the spot is now covered by the cathedral, but we cannot wisely go beyond this, especially when we remember how plentiful were the Roman materials close at hand. The fact remains: from the time of the erection of the memorial church to the founding of the monastery in A.D. 793, we have an interval which is unbridged by trustworthy testimony. A generation ago, Mr Roach Smith, a most sagacious observer, compiled a list of Kentish churches which he thought might be probable restorations of pre-Saxon structures[2]. In all of these Roman materials were found. Some of the churches, however, like those of Reculver and Lyminge, had peculiarities of site, and these examples will be noted later. Among the Kentish churches whose "Romanity," as the early antiquaries would phrase it, must be discredited, are those of Burham, Leeds, Southfleet, and Lower Halstow. Yet the last-named church is chiefly built of Roman spoil. The "Garden County" also yields Cuxton[3] and St Paul's Cray, with many another church inwrought with Roman tiles. Crossing the Thames estuary, we find, according to Mr Guy Maynard's computation, thirty-five Essex churches which have Roman tiles in their walls[4]. A writer in the *Athenaeum*, commenting on this list, gives a higher figure, and asserts that Essex contains at least sixty such churches[5]. We may safely infer

[1] Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, L. i. c. 7; *Vict. Hist. of Herts.*, 1908, II. p. 483; F. Bond, *English Cathedrals*, 1899, pp. 208–9.

[2] C. Roach Smith, *Collectanea Antiqua*, 1861, V. p. 199, and art. in *Archaeologia*, XXIX. pp. 217–26. Some of the examples, along with others, are considered by J. R. Allen, *Monumental Hist. of the Early Brit. Church*, 1899, pp. 12–19, 20–31.

[3] *Proc. Geol. Assoc.* XXIII. p. 464.

[4] G. Maynard, in *Memorials of Old Essex*, ed. A. Clifton Kelway, 1908, p. 32. The list was compiled from R. Miller Christy's *Durrant's Guide to Essex*, 1887, *passim*.

[5] *Athenaeum*, 1889, p. 314. Examples from other districts will be found recorded in the *Victoria Histories* for the respective counties.

from these facts that Roman ruins existed in the neighbourhood of each of the sites at the time when the walls were built. Any further conclusion must be viewed with suspicion, unless Roman remains are discovered beneath the buildings. The "argument from silence" is beset with peril in any department of archaeology. Moreover, some of the churches in the list—which might be greatly extended—belong, as Professor Baldwin Brown has observed, to purely Mediaeval settlements, and consequently have little evidential value[1].

We turn to a different class of churches—those which occupy the sites of Roman villas. The importance of these examples rests on the probability that some of the wealthier Roman converts would allow their dwelling-houses to be consecrated for Christian worship. From a small reception-room, arranged like an ordinary church, there might be developed a Christian building, with chancel, nave, and aisles complete. A scrap of testimony, slight though it be, favours this hypothesis. It is the discovery, on a mosaic, among the ruins of a Roman villa at Frampton, Dorsetshire, and again on a tile from the villa at Chedworth, Gloucestershire, of examples of the Chi-Rho monogram[2]. This sacred monogram has also been met with on such objects as bowls, seals, and rings. Seeing that the symbol was not used in Rome before A.D. 312, its presence in Britain cannot date earlier. On the other hand, remembering that the Roman departure took place in A.D. 410, we can scarcely assign the Chi-Rho to a later date. Mr J. Romilly Allen is therefore plainly near the truth when he attributes the British examples to the late fourth century[3].

The validity of the evidence afforded by the Chi-Rho, while unquestionable so far as the existence of British Christianity is concerned, is not decisive with respect to site-continuity. At the outset, one demands that the monogram should be found in juxtaposition with the later Christian churches built on older sites—not isolated from such buildings.

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, 1903, I. p. 270.

[2] O. M. Dalton, *op. cit.* pp. 3–4.

[3] J. Romilly Allen, *op. cit.* pp. 29–31, 40–1.

On the other hand, it would be passing strange if a large number of churches came to be built by chance on, or adjacent to, the areas once occupied by Roman villas, whether the confirmatory Chi-Rho were discovered or not. If we consider the case of direct continuity non-proven, and yet rule out the possibility of accident, a choice of two theories seems to be

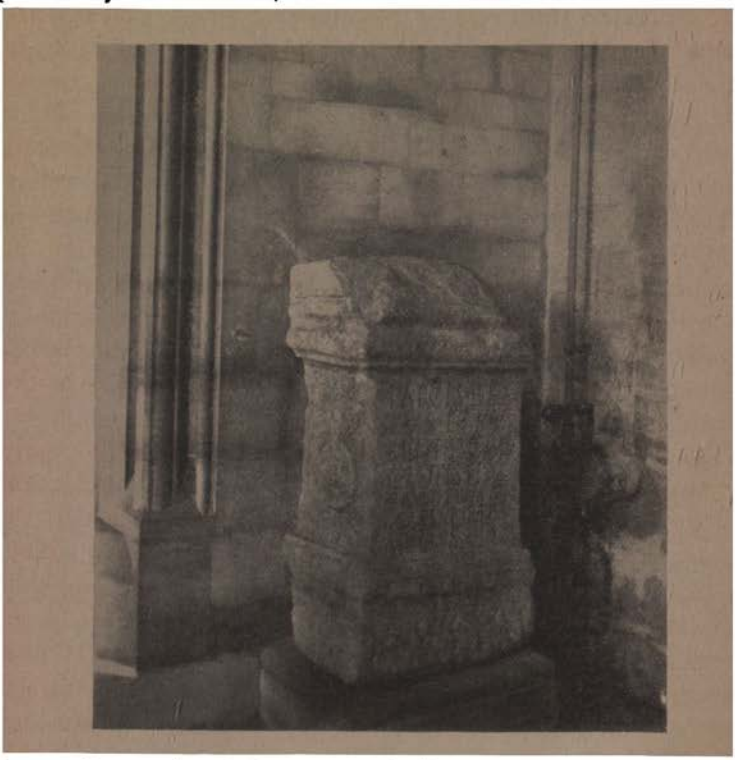

FIG. 1. Roman altar (2nd century A.D.), discovered on the site of St Swithin's church, Lincoln. Height, 3′; base, 1′ 9″ × 1′ 3″. The altar is hewn from a single block of oolite. The inscription states that the altar was erected by Gaius Antistius Frontinus, "thrice curator."

presented. We might either suppose that the church builders were keenly anxious to utilize ruined villas, or that, believing those villas to have been centres of pagan family-worship, deliberately chose to set foundation over foundation. That this second alternative is not altogether fanciful will be seen hereafter. A few examples of villa sites will now be given.

The churches of West Mersea, in Essex, and Wroxeter, in Salop, are believed to stand on sites of Roman villas; a little contributory testimony is afforded by the fact that the shaft of the font, in each case, is fashioned from the drum of a Roman column[1]. In the case of Wroxeter, however, the only tessellated pavement recorded by Professor Haverfield was found a little to the north of the church. The conditions are supposed to have been similar at Haydon and Chollerton, in Northumberland, and at Great Salkeld, in Cumberland; in all of these instances the fonts are said to be hollowed out of Roman altars[2]. During the rebuilding of St Swithin's Church, Lincoln (A.D. 1880–88), a Roman altar (Fig. 1) was discovered beneath the tower. The old fabric belonged to the Decorated period, while the altar dates from the second century of the Roman occupation. There is thus an intervening space of more than a thousand years, and this gap cannot yet be actually bridged over. At the deserted church of Widford, in Oxfordshire, portions of a Roman tessellated pavement were found in the chancel[3].

Professor Seebohm, who closely studied the district around Hitchin, and discovered strong proofs of unbroken occupation of village sites, gives some interesting examples which bear on our subject. He thinks that the church of Much Wymondley, near that town, stands within a Roman holding, probably that of a retired veteran[4]. A Roman cemetery was discovered hard by, and to the east of the church is a double "tumulus," which Professor Seebohm conjectured to be a "toot-hill," or a terminal mound[5]. These toot-hills will be again mentioned; meanwhile, we are bound to notice that more recent investigators claim this particular hillock as an early castle-mound. Nevertheless, it is stated that the mound and its associated bailey-court have been

[1] J. C. Cox and A. Harvey, *Eng. Church Furniture*, 1907, p. 167. Cf. F. J. Haverfield and M. V. Taylor in *Vict. Hist. of Salop*, 1908, I. pp. 228, 238. The church at West Mersea has a double dedication (St Peter and St Paul); this fact is believed by some to indicate an early foundation.

[2] J. C. Cox and A. Harvey, *loc. cit.*

[3] Murray, *Handbook for Oxfordshire*, 1894, pp. 195–6; A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England*, 1908, p. 345 n.

[4] F. Seebohm, *Eng. Vill. Community*, 1896, p. 431 (map given).

[5] Seebohm, *loc. cit.*

inserted into the corner of a larger (and presumably earlier) rectangular work[1]. A Roman villa is recorded from a field near Litlington churchyard, Cambridgeshire, and a Roman cemetery from a spot a short distance away[2]. Other examples have been noted at, or near, the churches of Woodchester and Tidenham, in Gloucestershire, and Wingham, in Kent[3]. The first-named

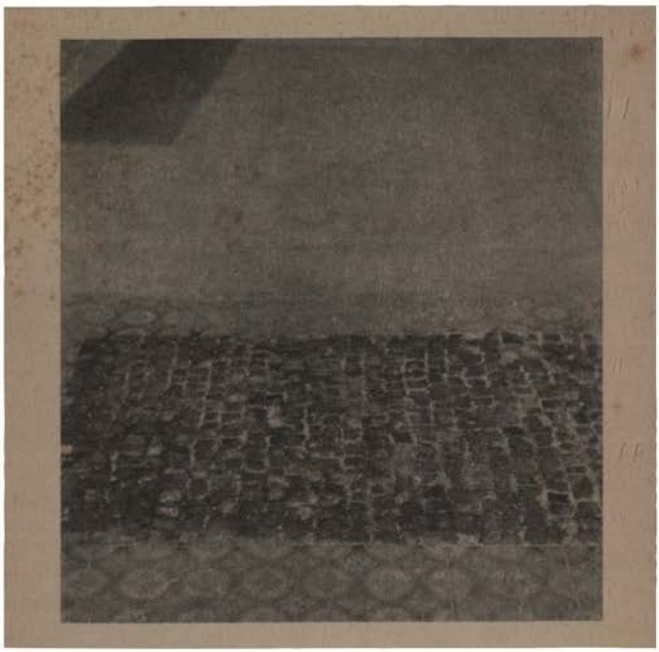

FIG. 2. Pavement of red and white tesserae, in the south aisle of the choir, St Saviour's Cathedral, Southwark. Found in the adjacent graveyard. (For a catalogue of the relics discovered under and near the building, see *Victoria Hist. of London*, 1909, I. p. 140.)

instance is the most instructive. In the churchyard an inscribed pavement, 25 feet in diameter, was uncovered, and near at hand, the ground plot of an extensive building was traced. The neighbourhood of St Saviour's Cathedral, Southwark, has yielded quantities of Roman remains. A portion of a pavement is shown in Fig. 2. Within the last two or three years, Roman pottery, and the upper portion of an amphora, have

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Herts.*, 1908, II. p. 119. [2] Seebohm, *op. cit.* p. 433.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 436. Cf. Murray, *Handbook for Gloucestershire*, 1895, p. 10.

been discovered while alterations were being made. These relics may be seen in the south transept. Whether the long list of "finds," given in the *Victoria History of London*, justify the old tradition of a pagan temple may be doubted, but, at least, the former existence of a villa is indicated. A tessellated pavement was discovered in the south transept of Southwell Cathedral, and Mr Francis Bond conjectures that this relic may have belonged to a Romano-British basilica which existed there in the third century. Did such a building exist, the church which St Paulinus is believed to have founded on this spot in the seventh century had a prototype, which dated four hundred years earlier[1]. In his recent standard work on Westminster Abbey, Mr Bond has also recorded the finding of a portion of a Roman wall, in position, under the nave of the Abbey, and a Roman sarcophagus in the northern part of the nave. Roach Smith alludes to foundations, probably Roman, which were unbared at Chalk Church in Kent[2]. The Saxon church of Bosham, Sussex, is another claimant for superposition on a Roman villa[3], and the fine old Saxon building at Brixworth, Northants (Fig. 3), is a further example, although no part of the present structure is older than the eighth century[4]. Our list is by no means exhausted. A very fine mosaic floor, worked in seven colours, together with a bath and other remains, were laid bare many years ago at Whatley House, Somerset, just behind the ancient church of Whatley. When the church of St Mary Major, Exeter, was being rebuilt in 1866, the Norman foundation was seen to cover a Roman tessellated pavement[5]. Still more recently, in 1906–11, during the process of underpinning Winchester Cathedral, the workmen discovered Roman coins and tiles[6]. These remains may have had no causal

[1] F. Bond, *Eng. Cathedrals*, p. 235. The Westminster discovery is recorded by Mr Bond in *Westminster Abbey*, 1909. p. 3.

[2] *Collectanea Antiqua*, 1861, v. p. 199.

[3] A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 346 n. For other Sussex examples, see *Vict. Hist. of Sussex*, 1907, II. p. 333.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., X. p. 11. Cf. G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. p. 336.

[5] Murray, *Handbook for Devon*, 1895, p. 22.

[6] The discoveries now include a tessellated pavement, pottery, and a Roman lamp (*Antiquary*, 1911, N.S., VII. p. 162).

connection with the present building, or with any hypothetical predecessor, yet the discovery was curious. We need have no desire to strain the evidence. 'In such instances as Winchester and Wroxeter, Roman ruins and Roman sites would be so plentiful, that no enterprising Saxon builder would overlook the economical value of the spoils. Again, he might unwittingly select an old site concealed by long-continued labours of earth-worms, and by natural agencies of weathering. Yet even this

FIG. 3. Interior of Brixworth Church, Northampton. Chancel and eastern portion of nave. The Saxon arches are constructed of hard red Roman bricks or tiles, set edgewise. The arches spring from square, massive piers which have simple abaci. The materials were evidently obtained from some edifice previously in existence near the site of the church.

admission will, in its turn, react if accepted too eagerly or too fully. We are dealing, so far, primarily with the existence of early British churches, and if we urge that old sites were re-occupied unintentionally, because they lay hidden from view, we imply that, in other cases, foundations hitherto undiscovered may rest beneath later architectural monuments. In other words, the foundations of a pagan temple may lie beneath a

Mediaeval church. There may have been continuity up to a certain date, and then a break; after which a new builder started work over the forgotten floor. Seeing that most of the Romano-British towns, at least, were continuously occupied since their first establishment[1], and that, as already shown, old material was intercalated between the courses of masonry in newer buildings, these facts alone would be sufficient to account for the obliteration of the earlier work[2].

Having now referred to the very doubtful instances of continuity represented by fabrics in which there has been an adaptation of Roman materials, and having glanced at those churches which stand on the sites of earlier buildings, we turn to Christian edifices which have been built adjacent to Roman camps. At present, we will consider those cases in which there is actual contiguity, but only a suggestion of purposiveness. The ivy-clad church of Ashtead, in Surrey, stands within a rectangular earthwork, partially defaced, and the visitor will readily detect Roman tiles in the walls of the chancel. At Rivenhall, in Essex, tesserae and Roman pottery were dug up in the churchyard, and a villa was unearthed in the neighbouring field. From the data available, one cannot decide whether or not a camp is indicated[3]. In the same county, we notice Stoke-by-Nayland, while Suffolk supplies us with the camp Burgh-castle—a most interesting example. St Furseus, or Fursey, built a monastery at this spot, but there remains only the church, which lies a little to the north of the Roman fortifications. Its walls contain triple bands of flints, faced by Roman workmen, while vases and potsherds have been discovered in the vicinity[4]. Squared flints of Roman workmanship were also found at Caister by Norwich[5]. The church of St Edmund, at the last-named village, was built by Mediaeval architects at one corner of a Roman earthwork, which encloses an area of 34

[1] W. Johnson, *Folk-Memory*, 1908, p. 88, et seqq.

[2] Conybeare, *op. cit.* pp. 265–6.

[3] *Essex Naturalist*, 1890, IV. p. 155.

[4] W. Harrod, *Norfolk Archaeology*, 1859, V. pp. 146–160 (plates and illustrations given); A. Suckling, *Hist. and Antiq. of Suffolk*, 1846, I. pp. 323–324; G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 270; M. Stokes, *Three Months in the Forests of France*, 1895, pp. xxxii, 158–62; A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 344 n.

[5] C. Roach Smith, *Collect. Antiq.*, V. p. 200.

acres. The present church, as Professor Haverfield points out, is certainly not a Romano-British "sacellum" or temple[1], but, in the absence of excavations, one cannot assert that no earlier ruins lie buried underneath the edifice. The oft-quoted instance of Castle Acre, also in Norfolk, must be dismissed as spurious. Professor Haverfield, who has carefully examined the evidence, could find no proofs in support of the tradition of a camp, though there was evidence of Roman occupation in the neighbourhood[2]. Under the present section, however, we must include Market Overton and Great Casterton in Rutland. The church of the latter village is situated at the south-west angle of an earthwork, presumably Roman, though of earlier construction than the Roman road hard by[3]. At Market Overton, the church stands entirely within a square Roman camp[4]. In the adjoining county of Lincolnshire, we get examples at Caistor and Ancaster[5], places bearing tell-tale names. The church of Horncastle is within a few yards of a Roman wall, a portion of which remains visible above the land-surface[6]. Lincoln Cathedral is built partly within and partly without a Roman camp[7].

In Durham, the church of Chester-le-Street, which contains some traces of pre-Conquest work, was originally inside a Roman camp, now unfortunately destroyed[8]. Ebchester Church, also in Durham, stands at the south-western corner of the ancient Vindomora, and has a foundation of large squared stones, but little can now be seen of the surrounding fortifications[9]. While surveying the North of England, we notice Moresby, near Whitehaven[10]. In Scotland, to mention but one case, we have the Cistercian Abbey of Cupar-Angus, which

[1] F. J. Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Norfolk*, 1901, I. p. 290. The whole series of Prof. Haverfield's contributions to the *Victoria Histories* will repay study. See also his valuable paper, *The Romanization of Roman Britain*, 1905, p. 33 (reprinted from the *Proc. Brit. Academy*, II.).

[2] Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Norfolk*, I. pp. 314–5.

[3] *Vict. Hist. of Rutland*, 1908, I. p. 37; *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., V. p. 173.

[4] *Vict. Hist. of Rutland*, 1908, I. p. 89; *Notes and Queries*, *loc. cit.*

[5] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., V. p. 173.

[6] *Ibid.* 3rd Ser., VI. p. 37.

[7] *Naturalist*, XI. 1886, p. 27.

[8] *Vict. Hist. of Durham*, I. pp. 221, 350.

[9] *Ibid.* I. p. 350.

[10] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., IX. p. 332.

was built, in A.D. 1164, within the boundaries of a Roman camp[1]. Returning to the south, we discover, in the churchyard of St John's-sub-Castro, at Lewes, a small Roman camp, of which the vallum is still traceable[2]. Porchester, in Hampshire, is a square-walled fort which occupies an area of 9 acres, and which encloses a Mediaeval keep and bailey-court at the north-west corner, and a Mediaeval church and graveyard at the south-west corner[3]. In like manner, the Norman church at Silchester nestles within the celebrated Roman settlement. Here our list of Christian churches placed within Roman camps must be curtailed, for we have still to consider earthworks belonging to an earlier period. The reason for separating the two classes of earthworks is, that those churches which were reared within Roman camps may, probably, in some cases, have replaced more primitive buildings, while those built inside prehistoric forts most likely had no predecessors. In other words, we shall have to search for different motives inducing the choice of the two respective series of sites.

At the very threshold of the inquiry a marked difference is noticed: the pre-Roman earthworks contained no building material to entice the churchmen within their boundaries. Turning to individual examples, we find a most instructive case at Knowlton or Knollton, Dorsetshire, four miles south-west of Cranborne. Here, a ruined church built by Norman labour, though not necessarily representing the first church reared on the spot, stands within a round British earthwork (Fig. 4). The ditch, or fosse, of the enclosure is situated on the inner side, as in the renowned earthwork at Avebury, Wiltshire. The Saxon church at Avebury dates in the main, perhaps, from the early tenth century, and stands just outside the vallum. Some writers have inferred, from the presence of the inner fosse, that these enclosures had religious, or, at least, sepulchral associations. The Knowlton earthwork is one of a group, and close by is a cluster of ancient, storm-beaten

[1] W. Roy, *Milit. Antiquities*, 1793, p. 133.
[2] Murray, *Handbook for Sussex*, 5th edition, 1893, p. 46.
[3] Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Hants*, I. p. 329.

yews[1]. Such a collocation, as will be seen in Chapter IX., is not without significance.

Another dilapidated chapel, now used as a barn, is situated within the oval camp of Chisbury, near Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire. This earthwork, which has double, and in some parts treble, lines of trenches, is described by Sir R. Colt Hoare as one of the finest specimens of castrametation in England. One rampart is 45 feet in height. The existing ruins represent a Decorated fabric which was dedicated to St Martin, but Mr A. H. Allcroft, in his *Earthwork of England*, suggests that a church was erected here after the drawn battle between Wessex and Mercia in A.D. 675. On the hill above Standish Church, Gloucestershire, is a somewhat notable camp. Although it is said that

FIG. 4. Ruins of Knowlton Church, Dorset, standing within an ancient earthwork.

the ditches were deepened during the Civil War, and although Roman coins have been dug up in large numbers[2], it is conceived that the camp was originally British. On the height just above Gunwalloe Church, Cornwall, is a "cliff castle"—one belonging to the Group A, as defined by the Congress of Archaeological Societies in 1903[3]. Such earthworks are inaccessible along a portion of their boundaries, on account of

[1] Allcroft, *op. cit.* pp. 564, 566; C. Warne, *Ancient Dorset*, 1872, pp. 101–105; *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. Soc.* XVII. 1896, pp. 138, 140; *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., IX. p. 77.

[2] Murray, *Handbook for Gloucestershire*, 1895, p. 11.

[3] J. B. Cornish, in *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I. p. 458.

the presence of cliffs or water. The site of the church of St Dennis, also in Cornwall, is associated with a "hill castle[1]," which is assigned to the Group B. In this class, the earthwork follows the contour of the hill. Another contoured camp, much disturbed and defaced, is situated on St Anne's Hill, near Midhurst Church, Sussex[2], while a small circular fortification may be seen to the west of the churchyard of South Moreton, Berkshire[3]. Coldred Church, Kent, was built actually within a fortress, conjecturally of Romano-British date[4], though the elevation of the earthwork is rather exceptional for that period, being about 370 feet above the sea-level, and 50 feet above the valley towards the west. Again, at Kenardington, also in Kent, an earthwork of unknown age, now much mutilated[5], surrounded the graveyard and part of the neighbouring fields.

The so-called Dane's Camp (Group B) at Cholesbury, Bucks., 600 feet above the sea-level, encircles the church of St Lawrence with its embankment[6]. Another St Lawrence, at West Wycombe, in the same county, is built inside a ring earthwork (Group B), which crowns the hill. This fort, probably of British construction, is remarkable for its double-terraced defences, and for the manner in which it commands three converging valleys[7]. A somewhat similar example was once visible at Brownsover, near Rugby, where, a century ago, the church and village were enclosed within elaborate entrenchments. These represented a fortress, constructed on a ridge which overlooked the valleys of the Avon and the Swift. The fort was probably prehistoric, although a cinerary urn, found in the churchyard, was identified as Roman.

The hill-village of Burpham, in Sussex, is clustered near an oblong promontory fort (Class A) constructed on a tongue of land, around which a loop is formed by the river Arun. A

[1] *Ibid.* I. p. 462.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Sussex*, 1905, I. p. 479. (Most of the earthworks, cited from the *Vict. Histories*, are illustrated, in those volumes, by plans.)

[3] *Vict. Hist. of Berks.*, I. p. 266.

[4] *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, 1908, I. p. 394. [5] *Ibid.* I. p. 397.

[6] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 134 n.; G. Clinch, in *Vict. Hist. of Bucks.*, 1908, II. pp. 22–24.

[7] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 134 n.; *Vict. Hist. of Bucks.*, II. p. 26.

gigantic vallum and exterior fosse cross the neck of the peninsula. The early Norman church of the village stands but a few yards beyond an entrance breach in the northern rampart. Mr A. H. Allcroft, pursuing the "method of exhaustions," declares the earthwork to be Danish, and Mr P. M. Johnston suggests that the church occupies a pagan site. At all events the juxtaposition can hardly be considered casual.

Immediately to the east of Hathersage churchyard, Derbyshire, may be seen a simple circular earthwork, consisting of a high rampart with a moat outside. It is classed by Dr J. C. Cox in the division C of the scheme above-mentioned[1], namely, the division which embraces round enclosures of a defensive character. An analogous earthwork adjoins the churchyard of Tissington, also in Derbyshire[2].

Without pursuing this quest further, one or two pitfalls must be pointed out. Entrenchments found near a parish church may sometimes represent portions of the "ring fence" of a Mediaeval settlement; and the banks, which once bore a hedge or palisade, might be hastily ascribed to an earlier period. Mr Allcroft, in the work just mentioned, cites numerous warning examples. Again, banks of boulder clay or glacial drift may assume a false appearance of ridging, as if due to the work of man. To glacial action I venture to assign the surface irregularities near Ludborough Church, Lincolnshire, though they may represent the partially erased banks of the Mediaeval village. Close by the neighbouring churchyard of St Lawrence at Fulstow, one sees similar unevenness of the ground, the most important hillock being perhaps a grave wherein were buried some sixscore parishioners who died of the sweating sickness in the early seventeenth century. Once more, the traces of earthwork, military or agricultural, below the church of St Michael, on Glastonbury Tor, Somerset, may not be very ancient, and I should not connect them in any manner with any ideas which were held by the Gothic architects.

We next inquire why churches should have been built in situations such as those which we have been considering.

[1] J. C. Cox, in *Vict. Hist. of Derbyshire*, 1905, I. p. 372.

[2] *Ibid.* I. p. 374.

Mr Allcroft, arguing apparently from the assumption that the church was a defensive building—in fact, almost the only one in the parish—considers that it was sometimes built near earthworks for additional security[1]. That Mr Allcroft's premises are sound, I shall attempt to show in the next chapter. That, in exceptional cases, his conclusion is correct, one would not care to deny. But can the theory be of general application? Scattered throughout the land are churches built in exposed and lofty situations, so that traditions, varying in detail, but related in their main principle, have sprung up to account for the choice of these isolated and inconvenient positions. Most of the stories put fairies, or, more commonly, the Spirit of Evil, in opposition to the efforts of the builders. Churches were moved in a night, or the day's work was undone by the malignant foes. In cases of this kind, as in those instances where churches stand in some secluded meadow, the reason may occasionally be found in the churlishness of the manorial lord, or in the fact that the village settlement has shifted since the church was built. Houses are demolished and rebuilt, but the church remains. The desire to place the church in an impregnable spot may more frequently account for the hill-structures, which will be considered in Chapter III., though not for the churches near earthworks, nor for the sequestered churches in the fields. Some other explanation must be sought, and, curiously enough, Mr Allcroft has incidentally suggested two other theories. The early missionaries to the pagan Saxons, he supposes, made their headquarters on deserted Roman sites, first, to demonstrate their own power in successfully defying the evil spirits which haunted those spots, and secondly, through the bad reputation of these earthworks, to obtain "something of a guarantee against molestation by human beings quite as formidable[2]." While not agreeing that the second motive would be very influential, with the first suggestion I find myself more in harmony. The miraculous power of withstanding devils and demons would not be without its effect on the ignorant. Moreover, the claim would be as effective during the Mediaeval as it was during the Saxon

[1] Allcroft, *op. cit.* pp. 548–9.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 344 n.

period. For we are not to suppose that superstition fled the land on the advent of the Normans. Who were these new folk, and what were their antecedents, that they should be free from slavish fears of the unknown? Legends were without doubt attached to prehistoric remains down to a late date; how intense and how gross are the superstitions of country folk even in our own day, only the close student of men and books can be aware. Thus, for some reason, inexplicable, except on anthropological grounds, there exists among the Lincolnshire woldsmen a prejudice in favour of burial on the heights, and many similar facts could be given.

Above all these causes of selection of prehistoric sites, however, one may place the spirit of compromise which actuated the missionaries. Everywhere, the preachers found that the Saxons, who were unaware of the real origin of the old defences, attributed them to diabolism. Devil's Dykes, Devil's Highways, Devil's Doors, as has been shown in another volume, meet us in every part of the country[1]. Believing firmly in the diabolic origin of the earthworks and megaliths, the Saxon was moved to fear, and to that slavish respect which is the child of fear. Yet it was pre-eminently in the open country, where such objects abounded, that the Saxon loved to dwell. It has been shown that, however much he may have avoided the walled towns—and these he did not shun altogether—the Saxon settler had no antipathy to occupation of the deserted villas and rural settlements[2]. Here, then, the potential convert, with his superstitions and aversions, lived and toiled. The monuments of earlier races he regarded with sacred awe. It would be well-nigh impossible to wean him from his creed by direct denunciation; it would be easy to win him over by toleration and compromise, and this possibility seems to supply the real explanation why earthworks and other spots with weird associations were chosen for many of the early churches. If it be asked why still more instances are not forthcoming, it may be answered that the earthworks were frequently too remote from settlements on the plains, and were too elevated in position, to tempt the builders, even when the desire for

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 70–1.

[2] Seebohm, *op. cit.* p. 436.

protection reinforced the primary purpose. Moreover, though the earliest open-air preachers in Saxon times may have selected the earthwork as a pulpit, the permanent church would not necessarily be built within that area. (It will save misapprehension, if an explanation of the use of the word "Saxon" be interpolated here. In strictness, there is a clear distinction between Angle and Saxon, dialectically and archaeologically. But it is impossible always to observe the differences, especially when the data are scanty. The term will be employed, then, in its old loose signification, to denote, as Mr Reginald A. Smith says, "the roving Teutonic bands that for centuries infested the Northern seas.")

FIG. 5. The "pharos" or lighthouse, near the church within Dover Castle (Bloxam's *Gothic Eccles. Architect.*). The building is hexagonal externally, and square within. The lower part is composed of flints and rubble, with bonding courses of Roman tiles. The upper part of the tower belongs to the Tudor period. The doorway shown in the drawing has now been blocked up.

We have now glanced at those churches which contain remnants of Roman ruins, and others which are built over Roman villas, or within Roman camps, and we have been led insensibly to examine buildings which are connected with

earthworks of other ages. The problem of site-continuity has constantly impinged upon the question of continuity of fabrics. A few paragraphs may now be devoted to a consideration of those churches which lay claim to a possession of one or both of these features. The small ruined church of St Mary, within the confines of Dover Castle, is a well-known example. It stands in juxtaposition with an octagonal structure, usually described as a pharos, or lighthouse (Fig. 5), and believed by some to be a fort belonging to the Romano-British period. This polygonal tower has an exterior casing of flint, dating from the fifteenth century, but the original uneven masonry of rubble and flint, bonded with bricks at intervals, is still visible at the base. The supposition is that the church, with the lighthouse, was utilized for Christian worship during Roman times. By most modern authorities, the church itself is attributed, and perhaps more correctly, to the late Saxon period[1]. Lyminge, in Kent (p. 4 *supra*), is another claimant. The foundations of a seventh-century chapel, probably of apsidal basilican plan (Fig. 6), have been traced here (A.D. 1899), but it is supposed that the present church, though rich in Roman materials, belongs entirely to a later epoch[2]. At Reculver (Regulbium), near Herne Bay, there is an example of a church which Professor Baldwin Brown places with that of Dover in a distinct category as representing possible authentic relics, since the buildings stand alone within deserted Roman stations. The church at Reculver stands over the foundations of a basilica, but the present building is probably altogether post-Roman, the earliest known date for the existence of a church on this spot being A.D. 670[3].

Dean Stanley held the belief, once shared by many antiquaries, that in St Martin's at Canterbury we have a veritable monument of early British Christianity—a monument, moreover, erected over a pagan temple[4]. Bede asserts that there

[1] Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 3; G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. pp. 3, 122; H. M. Scarth, *Rom. Brit.*, n.d., p. 213 n.; M. H. Bloxam, *Gothic Eccles. Architecture*, 1849, pp. 41–2.

[2] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 279, II. pp. 118–9, 340; Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 3. Cf. *Collectanea Antiqua*, V. p. 167.

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 270–3, II. p. 341; Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 3.

[4] A. P. Stanley, *Hist. Memorials of Canterbury*, 1875, p. 37.

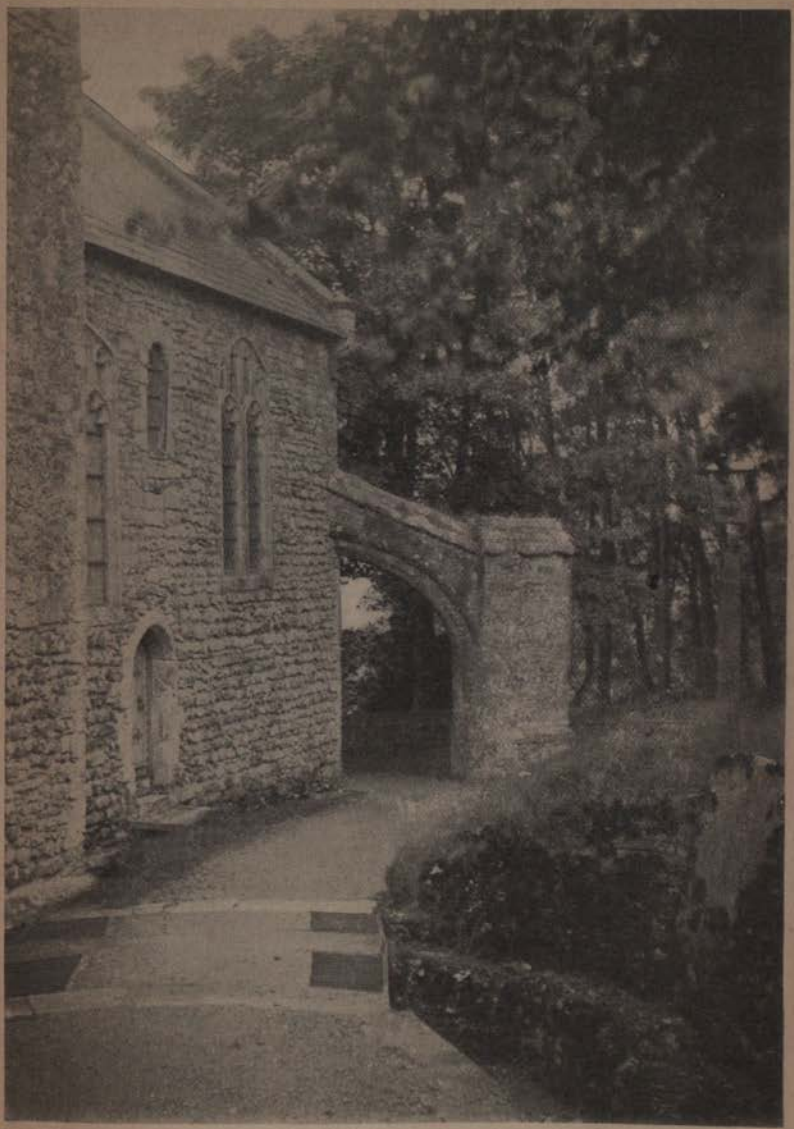

FIG. 6. Chancel of Lyminge Church, Kent. In the churchyard, to the right hand, is a portion of the foundations of a seventh-century chapel, composed of re-arranged Roman materials. The church seems to occupy the site of a villa.

was a church on this spot in Roman times, and that the building which existed in his day retained relics of the older structure[1]. In spite of this tradition, the popular belief is only doubtfully tenable. The site is old, and there may have been unbroken continuity, but the present building, though doubtless largely composed of the original materials, has been altogether rearranged[2] (Fig. 7). An exception may perhaps be made for

FIG. 7. Portion of chancel wall, south side, St Martin's Church, Canterbury. Roman tiles are seen abundantly in the wall on the right, and in the round arch; they are also bonded into the wall on the left. The wall is mainly seventh-century work, but the round-headed doorway is later, and the buttress has been modernized. The flat-headed doorway is probably original.

portions of the western nave, which Professor Baldwin Brown considers may represent early work. St Pancras, at Canterbury, by some writers judged to be older than St Martin's, must, under reserve, be given up, for similar reasons. Foundations, nearly complete, of a single-celled apsidal church have been

[1] Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, L. i. cc. 26, 33.

[2] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. pp. 119, 294, 337; Bloxam, *op. cit.* p. 33; Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 3.

revealed to the excavator, but the actual persistence of work above the surface is not demonstrated[1]. Other churches put forward are Ribchester, in Lancashire[2], and the chapel of St Peter's-on-the-Wall, at Bradwell (*Othona*), in Essex. St Peter's Chapel represents a barnlike building, of which the materials were evidently quarried from the adjacent fortress, but, once again, proof of continuity is lacking.

St Joseph's Chapel, at Glastonbury Abbey, presents us with an interesting case of probable retention of site, though not necessarily of continuous buildings. The earlier history of Glastonbury is, unfortunately, mainly a history of legends and traditions. We may well discredit the tale, told by the imaginative William of Malmesbury, a millennium after the alleged event, that, so early as the first century of the Christian era, a chapel constructed of osiers existed at this spot. That some kind of primitive church or oratory, with walls of wattle, and a roof of reeds, was set up during the Roman occupation is, however, very probable, and it may fairly be supposed, though it cannot be proved, that no break had occurred when the Saxon abbey was founded[3].

Among other churches for which a reasonable claim has been advanced is that of Jarrow, which Professor Brown places in his period "A," that is, the period anterior to the year A.D. 800[4]. Again, the oldest part of the cathedral church of Canterbury, as attested by experts, slightly supported by Bede's description, may be a relic of Roman Christianity[5]. We pass from these examples in order to glance at a church whose age may now be deemed undisputed, namely, the small apsidal church or basilica which was uncovered in 1892 at Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*). The nature of the building was at first much canvassed, and some authorities, relying chiefly upon the absence of Christian symbols in the mosaics, and upon other details, denied that the foundations were those of a church[6].

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. pp. 122, 294, 337.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Lancashire*, II. pp. 6, 553.

[3] B. Williams, in *Social Eng.* I. 1894, p. 36; Conybeare, *op. cit.* p. 265.

[4] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. p. 339.

[5] *Ibid.* II. pp. 260–3, 294.

[6] See discussion in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., II. pp. 101, 158, 277, 429; III. pp. 11, 110, 275, 322, 374. Cf. *Archaeologia*, LIII. pp. 564–8.

Curious to relate, the Chi-Rho, along with the Omega, was found impressed on the side of a small leaden seal which was dug up in the Silchester Forum[1], hence, if the basilica has yielded no evidence of Christian symbolism, such testimony lay hidden at no great distance. To be brief, not only is the basilica now accepted as genuine by the best authorities, but Messrs G. E. Fox and W. St John Hope declare that it is the only example of a Christian church of Roman date yet found[2].

On the ruins of the Silchester basilica no Gothic church sprang up, so that there was not site-continuity. Yet the parish church, which was afterwards built during the twelfth century, within the enceinte of the destroyed Roman town, has a direct bearing on the subject of this chapter. It is one of the two instances of churches which Professor Brown admits as having possibly superseded pagan Roman buildings. He does not, however, concede that we have any examples of Saxon churches which once actually formed parts of such temples. In all cases, the form and orientation of the churches, he asserts, betray an ecclesiastical origin. The churches may point to a survival of Romano-British Christianity, but that is another question[3]. Nevertheless, as Professor Brown himself notes, Silchester parish church was built close to the remains of two small Roman shrines of Gaulish type. The orientation of the church exactly agrees with that of one of the shrines, and this may indicate some relationship[4]. Messrs Fox and St John Hope have stated that the list of edifices dedicated to pagan deities in this country is very scanty, yet it is noteworthy that, of this list, three were recorded at Silchester. Moreover, one of these temples was found lying partly under the graveyard of the parish church, and partly under the buildings of an adjacent farm[5]. "Perhaps," say these writers, "the rising

[1] F. J. Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Hants*, I. p. 284.

[2] G. E. Fox and W. St John Hope, in *Vict. Hist. of Hants*, I. p. 364. See also *Archaeologia*, LIII. pp. 564-8; G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 145-6, II. p. 11; F. Bond, *Gothic Archit. in England*, pp. 195, 215, 223; O. M. Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 3.

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. pp. 125, 293.

[4] *Ibid.* I. p. 271.

[5] G. E. Fox and W. St John Hope, in *Vict. Hist. of Hants*, I. p. 364.

power of Christianity, as seen in the little church [the basilica] within the south-eastern corner of the Forum, may have made for their destruction[1]" [i.e. the destruction of the shrines]. May we not add that, should someone excavate a second Silchester, further evidence of this kind might be obtained? Dr Thomas Ashby's explorations at Caerwent (*Venta Silurum*) have, so far (1910), yielded no certain traces of a Christian church. The basilica discovered on the north side of the Forum is of a civil, not religious, character. We might frankly discard all the examples previously given, save perhaps those in which churches stand over Roman villas, and yet come to a wrong conclusion by arguing from the absence of particular witnesses. Other deponents may press forward. Before, however, we can examine these, we must make a rather lengthy digression to inquire if there exist *a priori* reasons for the annexation of pagan sites by Christian teachers.

We have, in proceeding to this examination, principally to consider the policy which was pursued by the early missionaries. Writing about Christianity in general, Harnack has shown that, during the third century, it united enthusiasm with the spirit of tolerance. "Stooping to meet the needs of the masses," the leaders studied polytheistic customs, instituted festivals and saints, and utilized sites already deemed sacred. To express the fact otherwise: the religion became syncretistic in the proper meaning of that term[2]. Christian and pagan ideas were blended. Following the wise, and, indeed, the only practicable method—that of peaceful permeation—the Church often retained the forms of heathen ceremonies, while actually investing these with new meanings. The process has been pithily expressed by Sir G. L. Gomme: "Christianity was both antagonistic to, and tolerant of, pagan custom and belief. In principle and purpose it was antagonistic. In practice, it was tolerant where it could tolerate freely[3]."

[1] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

[2] A. Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, tr. J. Moffatt, 1905, I. pp. 391–97; O. M. Dalton, *op. cit.* p. 28. Cf. W. E. Addis, *Christianity and the Roman Empire*, 1893, pp. 17, 18, 185–90.

[3] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Folk-Lore as an Historical Science*, 1908, p. 321.

As a matter of history, however, we learn that the policy did not remain strictly consistent, and a struggle for survival ensued. Under the rule of Constantine, the tendency was to destroy heathen temples and their idols, but by the Edict of Theodosius (A.D. 392), pagan shrines were to be dedicated as Christian churches. Later, the Edict of Honorius (A.D. 408) definitely forbade the demolition of heathen temples, at least in the cities[1]. These enactments seem to have a direct bearing on cases like that of Silchester and upon other examples, to be described hereafter. Leaping over a gulf of nearly two centuries, we discover Pope Gregory the Great (A.D. 601) sending a letter to the Abbot Mellitus, who was then about to visit Britain, commanding that, while idols were to be destroyed, the temples themselves were to be preserved. Holy water was to be sprinkled in the buildings, altars were to be erected, and sacred relics were to be placed therein. Anniversary festivals were to be appointed, and the new worship inaugurated[2]. Keeping this in mind, we are not surprised to find that, on the conversion of Ethelbert, two or three years previous to the Gregorian edict, Augustine received a licence to restore, as well as to build churches[3]. Whether these churches were pagan temples which had been partially despoiled, or Romano-British basilicas which had fallen into decay, we are left to conjecture.

On the continent, the breach of continuity of policy was still less perceptible. Grimm distinctly states that churches were erected on the sites of heathen trees or temples. He warns us against false conceptions of history. We are not to picture the poor peasants as being ruthlessly expelled from their accustomed places of worship. The heathen, he declares, were not so tame and simple, nor were the Christians so reckless, as to lay the axe to sacred trees, or to fire the pagan temples. The rude forefathers of the hamlet trod the old paths to the old site. Sometimes the very walls were retained, nay, the local idol or image was retained outside the door or within the porch. Thus,

[1] G. S. Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, 1899, p. 11; Conybeare, *op. cit.* p. 266.

[2] Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, L. i. c. 30.

[3] Bede, *op. cit.* L. i. c. 26. See also A. J. Giles's edition, 1887, p. 29.

at Bamberg Cathedral, in Bavaria, zoomorphic stones, inscribed with runes, passed the examination of lenient judges[1]. Again, pagan festivals were converted into Christian holy-days. The Yule-tide merry-makings in honour of Thor—revels which have also been connected by some writers equally with the gods Adonis, Dionysos, and Mithra—became the festival celebration of the birth of Christ. Canon E. L. Hicks (now Bishop of Lincoln) contends that the observance of the exact date, December 25th, as Christmas Day, is directly borrowed from Mithraism[2]. The old German feast in memory of departed warriors was metamorphosed into All Souls' Day, when the spirits of resting believers were kept in mind[3]. As with holy-days, so with symbols. Thor's hammer was replaced by the Christian Cross, and the heathen sprinkling of newly-born babes became Christian baptism[4]. Thus, by the retention of holy oaks, of idolatrous feasts, of pagan symbols and ceremonies, of the heathen names for the days of the week, the new religion gained entrance. In Ireland, where the problem to be faced was remarkably complex, the Christianization of pagan myths was very noticeable[5]. Here, the very names of the feasts long continued as in pagan times. Only when the conciliatory policy had "eased the yoke of the new ordinances," was it possible to take drastic measures, and to extrude heathenism from the places of worship[6].

But this time was slow in coming. In the heart of the

[1] J. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, tr. from the 4th edition by J. G. Stallybrass, 1882, I. pp. 43, 86–7 (and generally, chaps. iv. and vi.), IV. p. 1313. [I quote Stallybrass's translation throughout. It should be noted that the volumes are variously dated: I. 1882; II. and III. 1883; IV. 1888 (W. J.).] Cf. B. Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, 1851, I. pp. 268–9.

[2] J. M. Robertson, *Christianity and Mythology*, 1900, p. 36 et passim; Canon E. L. Hicks, in *The Roman Fort at Manchester*, ed. F. A. Bruton, 1909, pp. 44–5; Sir J. Norman Lockyer, *Stonehenge*, 1906, pp. 178–88.

[3] *Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXII., 1909, pp. 144 et seqq.

[4] *Folk-Lore as an Hist. Science*, p. 329.

[5] Thorpe, *op. cit.* I. pp. 268–9. Cf. J. B. Bury, *Life of St Patrick*, 1905, pp. 107–8; W. G. Wood-Martin, *Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland*, 1902, I. pp. 140–1; M. Stokes, *Early Christian Architect. in Ireland*, 1878, pp. 92, 96; *Antiquary*, 1910, n.s. VI. pp. 184–8.

[6] *Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, ut supra. Cf. E. Dale, *National Life and Character in the Mirror of Eng. Literature*, 1907, pp. 61–75.

Empire, as Friedlander has shown us, the triumphant Christians did, indeed, assimilate many heathen practices, yet they strove hard to stifle paganism altogether. On the other hand, all over Northern Europe, the spirit of compromise was at work. In Sweden, during this transition period, old associations were so strong that prayers to Thor and Freya were often mingled with Christian orisons[1]. Professor F. Kauffmann speaks of the great temple of Upsala, with its evergreen tree, and its mysterious sacrificial well, which received the bodies of the slain. So late as the eleventh century, this temple still stood in all its splendour[2]. Professor O. Montelius, while noting the frequency with which sacred stone-circles are associated with the church, considers that the cromlechs were not places of sacrifice, but of judgement. This idea is gaining ground in England, where also there is a tendency to change the nomenclature of megaliths. (To avoid confusion, it must be noted that "dolmen," in these chapters, refers to a "table-stone," that is, several upright stones capped by a flat one. "Cromlech" is used in its Breton sense of stone-circle, not in Welsh and Cornish significations of table-stone, nor in Sir Norman Lockyer's restricted connotation—a kind of "irregular vault generally open at one end.") At Gamla Upsala, near Upsala, a church was built on the site of a temple, which was the traditional burial place of Odin, and the centre of his worship. Modern excavations at this spot have yielded bones of horses, pigs, and hawks, together with relics of gold and silver[3]. This example is instructive, alike for its testimony to the value of folk-memory, and for its illustration of the employment of a pagan site. But, indeed, example can be piled upon example. At the Danish coast-town of Veile (or Vejle), two barrows, locally known as the graves of King Gorm and his queen, stand by the churchyard. Hard by are ancient stone monuments, bearing runic inscriptions[4].

[1] W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, 1879, p. 3. See also L. Friedlander, *Roman Life and Manners under the Early Empire*, tr. J. H. Freese, 1900, III. pp. 120–22, 210–14, for the struggle between Christianity and Paganism in Rome.

[2] F. Kauffmann, *Northern Mythology*, tr. M. S. Smith, 1903, p. 8. Cf. O. Montelius, *Civilization of Sweden in Heathen Times*, tr. F. H. Woods, 1888, p. 200.

[3] *Reliquary*, XIV. 1908, pp. 273–4.

[4] Thorpe, *op. cit.* II. pp. 221–5.

Nor do these Northern cases lack counterparts elsewhere. The church at Arrichinaga, in the province of Biscay, in Spain, was so built as to enclose the huge stones of a great dolmen; between the stones is placed the shrine of the patron saint[1]. The rugged land of Brittany is well-known to all travellers for its illustrations of lingering paganism; to some of these we shall again refer. But if we desire to learn how imperative, how inescapable, was the spirit of compromise, we should turn to the works of old writers, such as that curious old volume which relates Jean Scheffer's travels in Lapland in the latter part of the seventeenth century[2]. There, we shall discover a strange alloy of heathenism and Christianity, visible to all, seemingly condemned by none. Even in our own day, so recently as the year 1895, we hear of curious practices among the Samoyads. These folk, though nominally Christians, within modern times still sacrificed human beings clandestinely, and conducted heathen services within the ancient stone-circles, carefully screening the images of their gods from the public gaze.

Returning to the high road of our inquiry, we ask whether these examples can be paralleled in Britain. Consider for a moment the great wealth of our folk-lore, our superstitions, our almost incredible heathen practices. Grease from the church-bell to cure rheumatism; pellitory from the church-wall for whooping-cough; teeth from the graveyard to serve as charms; the midnight watchings on St Mark's Eve; the folk-tales about evergreens; the superstitions connected with baptisms, marriages, and deaths; the hundred and one little beliefs which run in an undercurrent beneath the apparently smooth surface of religious thought—do not these suggest that we may expect to find parallels to the continental examples of church-building on heathen soil? How strange if our islands had escaped the influences which are seen in almost every other European country! Yet, to speak plainly, our direct testimony is very scanty.

[1] C. F. Gordon-Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, 1883, p. 240. Cf. C. Warne, *Ancient Dorset*, p. 104, where it is asserted that the cathedral of Le Mans is built on the site of a stone-circle.

[2] Johannes Schefferus, *Lapponia, id est, Regionis Lapponum*, 1673, passim. An English edition by T. Newborough appeared in 1704.

We know that, at Rome, the Pantheon became a Christian church, and we have previously mooted the possibility of pagan idol-temples having been similarly treated in Britain. Conclusive proof cannot be given, since subsequent restorations would erase, or at least obscure, the vestiges which we seek. Professor Baldwin Brown admits two possible examples, without committing himself to a decided opinion. One is the church of Silchester previously noted (p. 23 *supra*), and the other that of St Martin's, Leicester. The latter church rests on the site of a Roman columnar structure, which would have been suitable for a temple[1]. There are also certain clues afforded by tradition and philology. At Woodcuts Common, in Cranborne Chase, there is an imperfect amphitheatre known as Church Barrow, which was excavated by General Pitt-Rivers. This high authority suggested that the depression which forms the arena was used for games, and, not improbably, in early Saxon times, before any church was built in the neighbourhood, for divine worship[2]. Mr Allcroft gives reasons for supposing that the present earthwork is on the site once occupied by a tumulus[3]. Whichever hypothesis be accepted, the name of Church Barrow will not be lightly set aside by the folk-lorist, for it does not stand alone. At a spot called Church Bottom, or Sunken Kirk, near Ickleton, in Cambridgeshire, Roman relics, suggestive of a columnar building, were discovered. Pitt-Rivers supposed that a Roman basilica, for Christian worship, existed on the site, and that it was re-adapted when the East Anglians became converted to Christianity[4]. The data, in this instance, are not plentiful, and one might perhaps conjecture, with equal reason, that the original building was pagan. An earthwork on Temple Downs, a few miles north of Avebury, Wiltshire, was traditionally called "Old Chapel." By the way, we notice that the names of Kirk, Old Kirk, Sunken Kirk, and Chapel Field, as applied to earthworks and sites containing ancient foundations,

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 271.

[2] A. L. Pitt-Rivers, *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, I. 1887, pp. 23–5.

[3] A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 592.

[4] Pitt-Rivers, *op. cit.* I. pp. 23–25. Cf. *Archaeol. Jour.* VI. pp. 17–18, 19–24.

are not uncommon[1], and one is naturally led to connect this fact with the known association of churches and earthworks. Again, at Llangenydd, Glamorganshire, there may be seen, in a field, the remains of a stone-circle which is still called Yr Hen Eglwys, "the old church," the meadow being known as Cae'r Hen Eglwys, "Old Church Field." Tradition says that here the inhabitants worshipped before the present church at Lalestone was erected. A remarkable parallel is exhibited in the Shetlands, where churches were often built, we are assured, amid the ruins of heathen "temples." The analogy consists in this: that the word "kirk" is now applied to holy spots, whether a chapel exists there or not. Again, Sandwich Kirk, in the island of Unst, represents the ruins of a reputed chapel which stood beside an ancient kitchen-midden. At Kirkamool, bones and pottery were dug up under the foundations of the sacred building[2]. Germane to this subject, one may mention the old ruins of Constantine Church, in Cornwall, which lie near an old kitchen-midden, and which have yielded to the spade of the explorer bones of men and domestic animals, besides pottery of the Mediaeval, Roman, and Neolithic periods[3].

Pursuing the trail provided by philology, one must glance cursorily at the theory propounded by Isaac Taylor that place-names like Godshill, Godstone, Godley, Godney, Godstow, and Godmanchester, are mute witnesses of the substitution of the new faith for the old[4]. The theory is certainly plausible, but, as Professor W. W. Skeat pointed out in a letter to the present writer, the question can only be settled by an appeal to carefully compiled name-lists, especially those which give the spellings that were current during the Middle English period. Now it

[1] A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 593 n. Cf. Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Northampton*, I. p. 193, and, for Welsh evidence, *Cambrian Journal*, 1858, 2nd Ser., I. pp. 204–5; Sir R. Colt Hoare, *Anc. Hist. of North Wilts.*, 1819, p. 42.

[2] *Antiquary*, n.s. I. 1905, pp. 133–8.

[3] R. Ashington Bullen, *Harlyn Bay*, 1902, pp. 69–70.

[4] I. Taylor, *Names and their Histories*, 1896, p. 390. Cf. 1898 edition, p. 136, also his *Words and Places*, ed. A. Smythe Palmer, 1909, p. 237. For *kil*, see *New Oxford Dict.*, s.v. For *llan*, see *Words and Places*, 1909, p. 328; *Cambrian Jour.*, 1857, 1st Ser., IV. p. 101; 1858, 2nd Ser., I. p. 204; *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1850, 2nd Ser., I. p. 17.

chances that my friend Mr A. Bonner has, for many years past, been making researches on these, and similar place-names, and he has kindly allowed me the use of his unpublished work. Thus, by the aid of Professor Skeat and Mr Bonner, one is able to test the theory that these particular names commemorate the establishment of Christian worship. To begin with, it must be observed that, owing to the modern defective and misleading system of orthography, not only may origins be disguised, but one mode of spelling may hide several possible etymologies. Thus, the A.S. *gōd* (= good) is frequently confused with *god* (= God); moreover, since *Gōd* (= Good) was also a personal name in Anglo-Saxon, we may get further complexity; e.g. Goodrich (A.S. *Gōd-ric*), in Herefordshire. Dealing with a few of the names mentioned above, we have Godstone, Surrey, appearing in the thirteenth century as Codeston and Coddestone, the spelling *God* being of much later date. Though the question cannot be settled in the absence of an Anglo-Saxon form, it is probable that the word denotes a personal name. Godney, Somerset, apparently represents "Gōda's island," and Godley, the name of a hundred in Surrey, "Gōda's meadow." Godshill (Gōds, i.e. Good's hill), Godstow, and Godstoke, again, all give indications of personal names.

Goodmanham, or Godmundingham, near Market Weighton, in Yorkshire, is believed to be the spot mentioned by Bede as having a celebrated pagan temple, and as being the scene of missionary work by Paulinus. Isaac Taylor was at first content to follow Grimm in deriving the word from the Norse (*godi* = priest, and *mund*, protection of the gods). Afterwards he discovered his error, for, in a later edition of *Names and their Histories*, he explains the name as the "home of the Godmundings or descendants of Godmund." Alas, in a posthumous edition, very recent, of *Words and Places*, the old blunder creeps in again. Mr Bonner states that the earliest form (c. A.D. 737), is Godmunddingham; the tenth century spelling was practically the same; hence the meaning is, "ham of the Godmund or Goodman family."

Again, the village-name of Malden, in Surrey, has been claimed as meaning "Hill of the Cross," and as indicating the

turn-over to Christianity. It is true that the Anglo-Saxon *mǣl* means a mark, and that the Domesday form, Meldone, points to a down on which stood some mark, probably a beacon or boundary post. Yet, although the village church is situated on the highest spot in the neighbourhood, whence the ground slopes away on two sides, the building does not stand on the Chalk downland, but on the London Clay. Moreover, although we have many post-Conquest orthographies, such as Maudon, Meaudon, and Maldene, to guide us, we lack evidence concerning the true A. S. form. Had the name been Christ's Maldon (*Cristes mǣl dūn*), it would certainly have implied a "hill with a cross or crucifix," just as, according to Professor Skeat, we have "Christ's *mǣl* ford," now oddly turned into Christian Malford (Wiltshire). The evidence for Maldon, in Essex, is more satisfactory than that for the Surrey village. Here we get the tenth century spelling Mǣldune, and, although the modern town is built on low ground by the river Blackwater, a hill, surmounted by a tumulus, rises behind to a height of 109 feet. Hence this name may perhaps be the equivalent of "Hill of the Cross."

The prefix *Llan*, which occurs so frequently in Wales and the Marches, affords a surer indication of a period when the possession of a church by the village community was the exception, and not the rule. Not only this; but expert opinion shows that *llan* signifies an enclosed or fenced-in space. The reference is therefore rather to the churchyard than to the sacred fabric, and it is believed by some that the word retains memories of the worship held within stone-circles. When we come to consider the relation of Bardic assemblies with parish churches, it will appear that this supposition is reasonable. Even in Wales, the prefix *Llan-* is sometimes replaced by *Kil-*, as in Kilfowyr and Kilsant, in Caermathenshire; but it is chiefly in Scotland that we look for such place-names. The word *kil* originally meant a hermit's cell, and afterwards came to be applied to a church. Finally, as an aid in detecting places which possessed churches at an early date, and which were thus pre-eminently worthy of special designations, we have the Norse, and Danish, prefix, *Kirk-*, as in Kirby, Kirk Ella, Kirkcolm.

Premising that a little additional testimony under the head of philology will be given later, we must now follow another clue.

On the whole, it must be conceded that the support derived from geographical names is somewhat feeble, yet it may prove capable of being extended as knowledge increases. Our next line of research gives fairer promise; it brings us to examine the ancient rude monuments which are frequently found in the vicinity of village churches.

The megalithic monuments recognized by the archaeologist are of several kinds, but we shall be here concerned with three of these groups—the menhir, or single upright stone; the cromlech, or stone-circle; and the dolmen, or "stone-table." These prehistoric remains seem to have seriously attracted the notice of the Teutonic invaders, who were prone to follow idolatrous practices based upon lingering traditions about the storm-fretted stones. To this superstitious respect attention has been drawn in a previous work[1]. Some indications of the honour imputed to these megaliths is gleaned from a study of parish boundaries, though it is almost certain that many of the stones erected in such positions belong to the historic period. The old open-air tribunals, too, were wont to meet at barrows, cairns, cromlechs, and menhirs, and at the foot of the crosses by which the menhirs were largely supplanted. This statement holds true for other places besides England. In the churchyard of Ste Marie du Castel, Guernsey, there existed three large stones, which marked the spot where open-air courts were held until recent years[2]. Evidence is also obtainable from several countries, showing that the election and coronation of kings and princes were associated with stone-circles. Nor, indeed, were our ancestors very exigent in this matter; a rude natural boulder or monolith was considered a good substitute for the artificial pillar which had been erected by forgotten folk. Over and over

[1] *Folk-Memory*, 1908, p. 139 et seqq.

[2] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, pp. 108–9, 129–30, 192, 227–33; H. N. Hutchinson, *Prehist. Man and Beast*, 1896, p. 258; R. W. Eyton, *A Key to Domesday*, 1878, p. 143. Cf. T. Cato Worsfold, *The French Stonehenge*, n.d. p. 40. Some curious information, to be read critically, will be found in W. Charleton's *Chorea Gigantum, or Stone-Heng restored to the Danes*, 1663, pp. 42–50.

again we meet with "blue-stones"—chiefly glacial boulders—which were set up to mark the limits of a parish, or to form the trysting-place of a manorial court[1]. Lastly, it is on record that Patrick, Bishop of the Hebrides, desired Orlygüs to build a church wherever he found the upright stones or menhirs.

One of the best known of the natural megaliths to which traditions cling is the Agglestone, or Hagglestone, situated on the moors near Studland, in Dorsetshire (Fig. 8). This Agglestone is a huge inverted cone of indurated rock in direct

FIG. 8. The Agglestone, Studland Heath, Dorsetshire. A natural mass of concretionary sandstone belonging to the Bagshot sands of the district. Much pagan tradition is associated with this block, which has been curiously eroded by rain, frost, and wind. The so-called "Druid's basins" are altogether natural cavities.

connection with the Lower Bagshot Sands on which it rests; in other words, its shape and position cannot be artificial. It is a mass of sandy material, so thoroughly cemented by oxide of iron that it has resisted denudation with some degree of success. Yet the so-called sub-aërial agencies, principally wind and rain,

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 144–5, 336.

have undercut its base, rounded its outlines, and scooped out the "rock-basins," which the eighteenth century antiquaries ascribed to the labours of Druids[1]. It is noteworthy that the Agglestone belongs to a part of the country the inhabitants of which were pictured by Bede as confirmed pagans (*paganissimi*)[2]. From a review of the legends, as well as from a consideration of the name, Agglestone (most probably from A. S. *halig* = holy), and its alternative designation, Devil's Nightcap, there is fair reason to believe that the stone had some significance to the heathen folk of Wessex, and that it was very probably a Christian preaching station.

The Agglestone doubtless proved too unwieldy and obdurate for the tools of those who set up the first Christian crosses, but this has not been the case with many other pillars, whether hewn or unhewn. Some of the upright "crosses" of Devon and Cornwall, for instance, are of extremely coarse workmanship, as the student may see for himself by inspecting the illustrations given in the works of Messrs A. G. Langdon and W. Crossing[3]. Nor need the simplicity of the early workmanship cause surprise, for the oldest Cornish crosses date from the seventh century. A like plainness is met in many other parts of England. At Fulstow, Lincolnshire, I noticed a crude churchyard pillar of hard, grey chalk, roughly squared, now mounted on a much more recent plinth. The stone is much pitted by weathering, and is clad with lichens of varying hues. If the monolith be not a pre-Christian relic, trimmed into a rectangular form, it is most probably a very early pillar, co-eval with the first Early English church. It may have been dug out of the boulder clay, like many of the stones with which the churchyard paths are paved; or, if we accept modern theories respecting the glacial drift on the East of the Wolds[4], it is not an ice-borne relic, but must have been brought to the alluvial plain by man. The original home of the pillar was in the hill-slope, several miles to

[1] The stone is fully described by C. Warne, *Anc. Dorset*, 1872, pp. 137–9.

[2] Bede, *Eccles. Hist.* L. iii. c. 7.

[3] A. G. Langdon, *Old Cornish Crosses*, 1896, passim; W. Crossing, *Anc. Stone Crosses of Dartmoor*, 1887, passim.

[4] See F. W. Harmer, in *Geology in the Field*, ed. H. W. Monckton and R. S. Herries, 1901, Pt i. pp. 110–113.

the West. This Fulstow "cross" is typical of others scattered throughout the East of England. Reverting to Cornwall, it must be observed that the numerous inscribed monoliths of that county are believed, on a balance of probabilities, to be of a Christian character[1]. Specimens are frequently found in remote spots, or they may occur in proximity to the church itself. At Camborne, an example is seen under the communion-table; at East Cardinham, in the graveyard; at St Cubert, in the wall of the church[2].

The early pillar "crosses," though accounted Christian when tested by inscription and decoration, may yet have an earlier origin. It is now a commonplace that many of the crosses and calvaries of Brittany, "with shapeless sculpture decked," are merely primitive menhirs adapted by the Christian artificer[3], and anyone who, like the writer, has had the opportunity of comparing the Breton series with the kindred group of our English Brittany, will readily agree that a similar story may be told of Cornwall. Something has been written on this topic elsewhere[4], and one need now only call attention to a curious instance of reversion in connection with the allied subject of tombstones, to show how deep-seated and perennial is the habit of imitation. In the "Quaker's Cemetery," two miles from Penzance, the only tomb remaining within the enclosure is formed of a massive slab of granite ($5'.7'' \times 2'.1'' \times 1'.1''$), resting on large pieces of the same kind of rock. The tomb is evidently a copy of the dolmens of the moorland, yet its date is so recent as A.D. 1677[5]. This illustration of the "past in the present" supplies a warning note, and is not so irrelevant as it may appear for the moment.

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I. pp. 407, 415, etc.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Z. de Rouzic, *Les Monuments Mégalithiques*, 1901, pp. 29–30, 34; T. Cato Worsfold, *The French Stonehenge*, n.d., pp. 15–16; G. Allen, *Evol. of the Idea of God*, 1903, p. 147.

[4] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 133–6, and authorities quoted. This view is also taken by J. Romilly Allen in *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1905, p. 186. Cf. A. G. Langdon, *op. cit.* pp. 4–7; W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of Northern Counties*, 1879, p. 3, notices several Scottish examples.

[5] *Antiquary*, n.s. VI. 1910, pp. 21–26, illustration given.

We may follow our work by inspecting some interesting cases of the occurrence of unshaped masses of stone in, or near, the fabric of the church. We must start, however, with the clear axiom that natural blocks of stone, where readily procurable, must, like the spoil heaps of Roman buildings, at all times have invited the attention of masons. Not more than fifty or sixty years ago, Sir A. C. Ramsay noted that the "greywethers," or sarsens, of the Marlborough Downs, were so thickly strewn over the surface, that across miles and miles of country a person might almost leap from stone to stone, without touching the ground. Yet, in our own day, the preservation of the greywethers has become a serious task, because they have been found so useful for paving-stones during the interval that has elapsed since Ramsay wrote, and it has been difficult to stop depredations on those that remain. Not forgetting our warning, there is still a possibility that, should the examples of churchyard sarsens prove numerous, and should there be a co-operation of other factors which indicate early sites of pagan worship, these two series of circumstances may be in relationship. A solitary example might be declared accidental; two or three citations only might raise an incredulous smile; hence, it is the cumulative force of recurring details which can alone afford pretence for a theory.

Situated in a long, dry Kentish valley which runs upwards in a Southerly direction towards the escarpment of the Chalk, and at a distance of about 1½ miles from the railway station at Eynesford, one may see the forlorn wreckage of Maplescombe church (Figs. 9, 10). This church, which had a semi-circular apse, still partially remaining, has been in ruins for three centuries. My attention was first called to the spot by Mr Benjamin Harrison, of Ightham, an archaeologist whose knowledge of his native district is unsurpassed. On visiting the ruins in 1904, I found a large, partially-sunken sarsen stone (3′.0″ × 2′.0″ × 1′.6″) occupying what appeared to be the site of the ancient altar. A few smaller sarsens were also discernible, and other specimens, Mr Harrison states, have been carried off, at various times, by hop-pickers, to build hearths in the fields. In the field adjoining the church, the ploughshare has turned up

FIG. 9. Ruins of Maplescombe church, Kent. View from the North-West. The ruins are unenclosed, amid a field of cabbages. The interior space is overgrown with brambles and elder bushes, but the semicircular apse can be detected on the left.

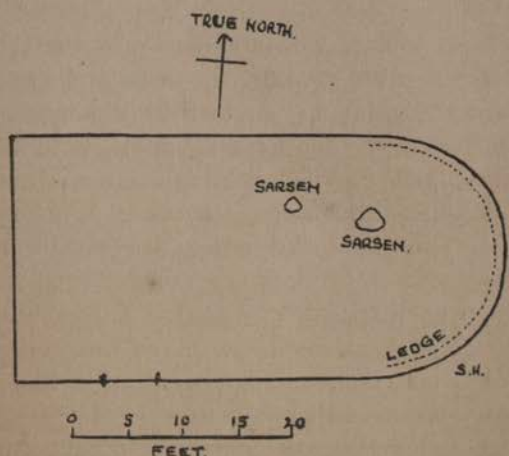

FIG. 10. Sketch plan of the ruins of Maplescombe church, Kent, showing the positions of the sarsen stones.

human bones and other relics[1]. This area was presumably the graveyard, and may have been originally unenclosed, but with this hypothesis we shall deal in a later chapter. Parenthetically, it may be explained to the non-geological reader that a sarsen is a hard mass of rock, which was once part of the Bagshot Sands or the Woolwich and Reading Beds, and which, having resisted denudation, remains on, or near, the present surface of the soil. The earliest record of a church at Maplescombe is A.D. 1291, but the building may, perhaps, be of Norman foundation, and the largest stone may possibly be a sacred relic which existed previously on the present site. The worship of "stocks and stones" died hard, and it is at least conceivable that the church builders adapted one or more megaliths to form an altar. Further than that we cannot go, seeing that sarsens are fairly common in the locality. Examples of churchyard sarsens are abundant in Kent. Mr Harrison informs me that there are specimens at Kemsing Halling and Trottescliffe; in the last-named village, the stone is built into the church wall. At Meopham, there are several blocks just outside the churchyard, but, as the ground is merely fenced in, we have again, doubtless, an instance where the demarcation between consecrated and unconsecrated soil is of modern date. Still further records from Kent have been supplied by Mr F. J. Bennett. The ruins of the churches at Punish and Paddlesworth (near Snodland) enclosed in each case a large sarsen; the nave of the dismantled church at Dode contains a good-sized specimen; several other blocks stand just outside the graveyard wall at Birling[2]. In passing, it may be observed that the other Kentish village named Paddlesworth, near Lyminge, contains a font, of which the base is a massive round stone, evidently of great antiquity.

We now examine other counties where the Tertiary beds are represented. Crossing the Thames, we find in the churchyard of Ingatestone, Essex, a large sarsen, which was

[1] A description of the ruins will be found in *Harlyn Bay*, pp. 69–70; *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, 1908, I. p. 320; *South-Eastern Naturalist*, 1904, p. 32. For discussion of the word "sarsen" see *Folk-Memory*, pp. 260–2.

[2] *South-Eastern Naturalist, loc. cit.* See also A. E. Salter, in *Trans. Herts. Nat. Hist. Soc.* 1911, XIV. pp. 135–142.

formerly a part of the foundation of the church[1]. At Pirton, in Hertfordshire, a huge mass of conglomerate, or "pudding-stone," consisting of rounded flint pebbles cemented by a siliceous matrix, supports the North-Western buttress of the church. The block, as determined by my friend, Mr James Francis, F.G.S., measures $5'.6'' \times 2'.7'' \times 1'.4''$ above the ground. At the base of two other buttresses on the North side are further lumps of conglomerate, each about 3 feet in length. These "pudding-stones" are vulgarly believed both to breed and to increase in size, and the superstition is put forward to account for a block of this material which projects from the foundation of Caddington church, Bedfordshire[2]. It is worthy of notice, in passing, that a pre-conquest church existed at Caddington.

Our observations would be incomplete were they limited to the Tertiary area of South-Eastern England. In Devonshire, built into the chancel wall of North Molton church, we have a large, heavy stone, which is said to be composed of material foreign to the district[3]. At Branscombe, in the same county, where the church bears marks of considerable antiquity, a rough pillar, about seven feet long, doubtfully described as a coffin lid, lies in the churchyard. Just outside the churchyard wall of Whatley, Somerset, is a huge rounded sarsen, and another is to be seen near the cross-roads 50 yards distant. When the London Geologists' Association visited Whatley in 1909, a doubt was raised whether the stones were true sarsens. Some authorities pronounced the material to be millstone grit, which could be obtained a few miles away; while, on the contrary, no Tertiary rocks occur in the immediate district. In Cornwall, there was discovered, under the collapsed Western tower of Constantine church, a large, rounded boulder of Cataclew stone, weighing a quarter of a ton. The nearest locality from which this stone can be obtained, says the Rev. R. Ashington Bullen, is a quarry which is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles distant in a straight line. Mr Bullen believes that the boulder marked a meeting-place for ceremonial obser-

[1] *Proc. Geol. Assoc.*, 1906, XIX. p. 317.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., VIII. p. 365. Cf. 8th Ser., VII. p. 485; VIII. p. 431; and Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, L. XXVI. c. 29; L. XXIX. c. 13.

[3] *Antiquary*, N.S. II., 1906, p. 120.

vances in pagan times, and that consequently it was assigned a place of honour in the Christian building[1]. It will be recalled that the ruins are adjacent to a kitchen-midden (p. 31 *supra*). At Bolsterstone, near Deepcar, in Yorkshire, two large stones lie in the village churchyard. One of them has been adapted for receiving another stone by mortising. On the high ground above the church is a cairn known as Walderslow, and it is believed that the churchyard stones may have had connection with this monument. The diligent searcher will not fail to discover many other examples of these natural megaliths, but he will doubtless preserve considerable detachment of mind, and be wary in the acceptance of theories. The scarcity of suitable rocks in many localities, the difficulties of transport,—whether accomplished by ox-drawn sledges or by canal barges,—the saving of time, and, far more important, the lessening of expenditure, are factors which must receive full weight. Nevertheless, while maintaining due reticence, we shall find ourselves continually wondering whether the probabilities do not point to site-continuity. The pronounced liking for megalithic monuments exhibited by the primitive Britons must have strongly influenced all future comers for many a century. All analogy suggests that Mediaeval folk were still sufficiently pagan to treat such relics with a kind of "hyperdulia." A sacred stone, or group of stones, may well have been embedded in the walls of the church, or set up as an altar, in order to propitiate those who gave up the old faith with reluctance.

When we examine megaliths which were indubitably placed in position by the labours of men, we find ourselves on surer ground. The building of churches near such memorials as these cannot always have been at haphazard. Moreover, we should bear in mind that all the evidence is not now producible. The hand of the spoiler has been busy, and the results have been lamentable. Utility has been the common plea for the removal of many ancient monuments, but other motives have also been at work. The famous "Longstone" which formerly stood a little to the East of St Mabyn church, in Cornwall, was broken up and carried away in order "to brave ridiculous

[1] *Harlyn Bay*, pp. 69-71.

legends and superstitions[1]." Happily, the well-known menhir in Rudstone churchyard, near Bridlington (Fig. 11), remains with us. This pillar, which is composed of fine-grained grit, stands about 4 yards from the North-East angle of the building. Its height is 25 feet, and it is believed by some authorities that an equal length is concealed underground. The monolith was first fully described by the Rev. Peter Royston, in 1873. The present Vicar of Rudstone, the Rev. C. S. Booty, informs me that Mr Royston's measurements are accurate. The conjecture has been made that the village took its name from the menhir. This may well have been the case, but what the first syllable of the name means is another matter. The word is commonly said to signify Rood-stone. The Domesday form Rodestan (cf. 13th cent. Rudestone; 14th cent. Ruddestan, Rudston, etc.), leads Mr Bonner to suppose that a personal name, Rod, Rodd, or Roda, is indicated. If the monolith bore an incised or carved cross, Mr Bonner would admit the rendering "Rood-stone." But it should be remembered that a simple pillar might have been called a cross, and that it may have been accepted as a preaching cross. To consecrate an existing stone would save much labour. On this view, "Rood-stone" may actually be correct. Country-folk do not care for etymology or archaeology, but they have not been remiss in attributing the presence of the stone to diabolic agency. What concerns us at the present is, that the site of the church was probably selected because the spot had already some significance to the older inhabitants of the neighbourhood. The whole district of Rudstone is rich in prehistoric remains[2].

The "sacred chair" of Bede, at Jarrow, is considered by Professor Rupert Jones to be an ancient sacred stone, which has been chiselled into shape by modern masons[3]. The Coronation Stone, in Westminster Abbey, has also perhaps a notable genealogy, but its deposition in its present quarters took place long after the foundation of the Abbey, and hence the relic is not illustrative of our theory.

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, 1906, I. p. 379.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Yorkshire*, 1907, I. p. 369; *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, pp. 24–5; P. Royston, *Rudstone, a sketch of its History and Antiquities*, 1873, pp. 43–83.

[3] *Harlyn Bay*, p. 70.

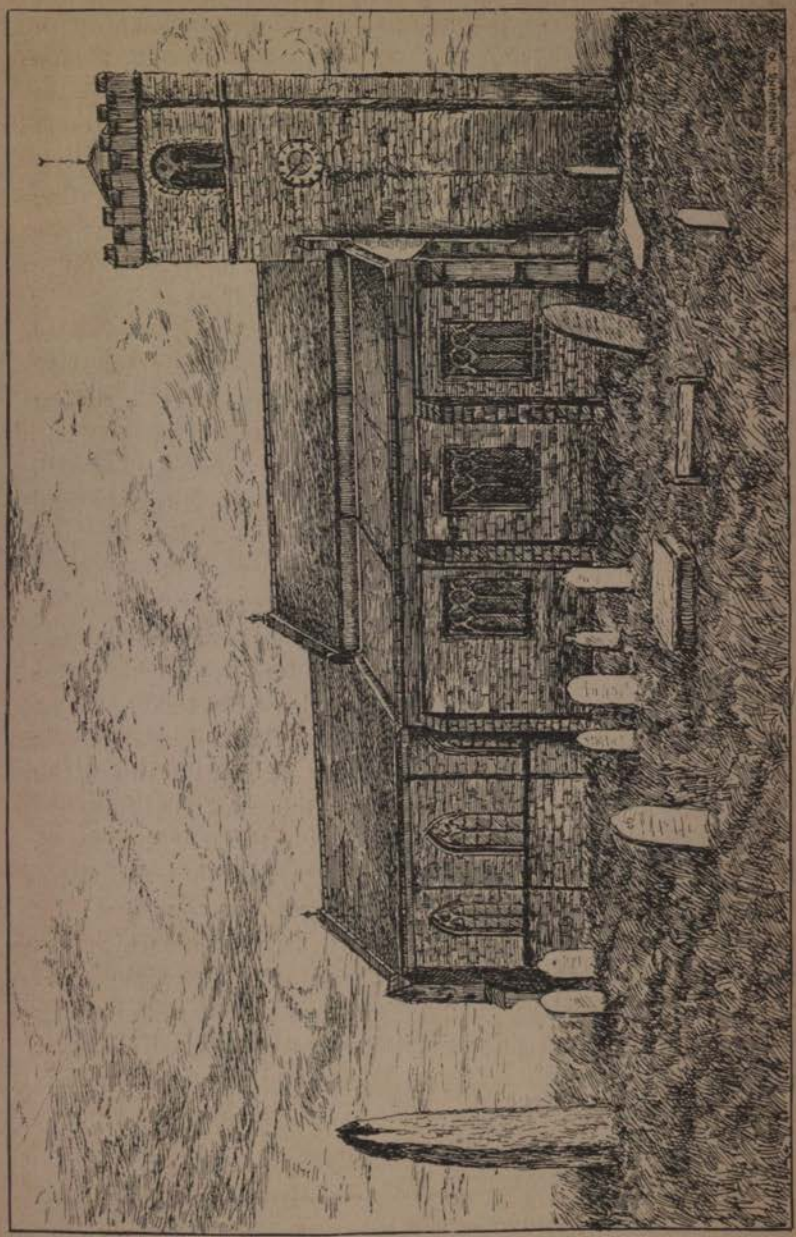

FIG. 11. Rudstone church, and monolith, near Bridlington. View of the North side.

On the Greensand hill a little above Mottestone church, in the Isle of Wight, there is a huge, untooled monolith, known as the "Longstone," but it is not certain that it was originally solitary. A smaller pillar lies at its base, and Mr W. Dale, the Hampshire archaeologist, supposes that the two stones represent a fallen dolmen, or the remnants of a cromlech[1]. Other writers have considered the relics to be ancient boundary stones[2], but I think this explanation not very satisfactory. The Rev. G. E. Jeans, who advocates the boundary-theory, declares against the view that Mottestone signifies "mote-stone," and points out that the Domesday spelling, Modrestone, indicates a personal name, Modr[3]. Even allowing for possible approximations made by the Domesday scribe, the etymology given by Mr Jeans seems more reasonable than the older one. Another Hampshire village, Twyford, on the Itchen, is worthy of a visit in connection with megaliths. The church in this old-world nook was believed by Dean Kitchin to be built on ground once occupied by a stone-circle or a dolmen, and Mr Dale considers that the two large sarsens which lie by the side of the building represent the wreckage of this ancient monument[4]. A particularly fine yew in the graveyard will be noticed in a subsequent chapter. On the neighbouring hillside of Shawford Downs, there are also some linchets, or ancient cultivation terraces. These associations imply that Twyford was not only an inhabited site, but presumably a sacred site, at a very early period. Still another Hampshire example is furnished by Bishopstoke, the church which Mr Hilaire Belloc asserts was erected on the site of an old stone-circle[5]. Cobham church, in Kent, stands a little to the North of the remains of a stone-ring. Outside the North porch there is a large sarsen, another lies against the wall at the West end, while a third is built into the South wall[6]. Thomas Wright long ago pointed out that the church of

[1] *S.-E. Naturalist*, 1909, p. 28, and Plate xx.

[2] G. E. Jeans (editor), Murray's *Handbook for Isle of Wight*, 5th edition, 1898, p. 51.

[3] G. E. Jeans, *loc. cit.*

[4] *S.-E. Naturalist*, 1909, p. 28; *Antiquary*, N.S., 1906, II. p. 80.

[5] H. Belloc, *The Old Road*, 1904, p. 64.

[6] *S.-E. Naturalist*, 1904, p. 32.

Addington, in Kent, was in the immediate neighbourhood of numerous megalithic remains, though all of these were in a ruinous and disordered condition. In fact the area seemed to be a vast tribal cemetery. Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie, in 1878, was able, from a study of the monumental relics, to make an imaginary restoration of parallel avenues of stones as they once existed. At the North-Eastern extremity, there was a stone chamber which has unfortunately since been disturbed[1]. Some writers have believed that the hillock on which Addington church is built was artificial, but it is practically certain that it is purely natural; its existence being perhaps due to a protective capping of ironstone which has been proof against denudation.

The church of Stanton Drew, near Bristol, is placed within the precincts of a veritable Valhalla of monumental relics. Three stone circles are situated, as it were, within a stone's throw of the building, the most distant being about one-third of a mile away, and the nearest only 150 yards. But besides these more perfect remains, there is a group close to the churchyard, towards the South-West. This group, called the Cove, consists of two upright blocks, 10¼ feet and 4½ feet respectively in height, and one prostrate stone, 14½ feet in length (Fig. 12). The original character of the monument cannot be decisively known. Mr C. W. Dymond contends that the stones hardly represent a ruined dolmen, because of the unusual height of two of the remaining pillars. Other speculations, hazarded, as it seems to the writer, without a vestige of proof, regard the Cove as a "druidical chair of state," and, again, as a shelter for sacrificial fire. On the whole, it is safer to consider these monoliths as survivors of a cromlech or stone-ring. The material, which is unhewn, is a siliceous breccia of Triassic age, and was probably brought from Harptree-under-Mendip, about seven miles from the present position. The church, it should be added, retains portions of Norman work[2].

[1] Murray, *Handbook for Kent*, 5th edition, 1892, pp. 207–8; *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 1880, XIII. pp. 14, 16 (and plate); *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, 1908, I. p. 319; F. J. Bennett, *Ightham, the Story of a Kentish Village*, 1907, pp. 47–8.

[2] W. Boyd Dawkins, in *Vict. Hist. of Somerset*, 1906, I. p. 191; C. W. Dymond, *Guide to Stanton Drew*, 1896, p. 11 et seqq.; Sir J. Norman Lockyer, *Stonehenge and other British Monuments*, 1906, pp. 166–77.

FIG. 12. The Cove, Stanton Drew, Somerset; a group of megaliths situated near the village church.

The vanished menhir of St Mabyn has been noticed (p. 42 *supra*), but, before leaving the English megaliths, we ought to glance at the smallest cromlech in Cornwall, that of Duloe, which is situated near Duloe church. Its longer diameter is 39 feet, and its shorter, 37 feet, so that the cromlech is slightly elliptical. The "circle" contains seven standing stones, and one fallen or broken stone. One of the pillars, which are very unshapely, is 9 feet in height. The finding of charcoal, together with a cinerary urn enclosing bones, near one of the pillars, is sufficient to show the sepulchral character of the circle[1]. Cornwall should indeed prove the touchstone of our theory, and I believe that both Cornwall and Devon would stand the test well, could we recall the witnesses. But these, sad to relate, are for the most part gone. Here a gatepost, there a tombstone, and yonder the hearth of a cottage, warn us not to expect the impossible. Sir Norman Lockyer, in his work on Stonehenge, asserts that many churches have been built on the sites of circles and menhirs, but he proffers no actual examples[2]. He gives, however, numerous instances from Cornwall, Ireland, and Scotland, of the juxtaposition of megaliths and sacred wells. Now, it will be shown in the next chapter, that churches were frequently built in proximity to holy wells, so that we have a triple relationship. Sir Norman Lockyer's informant doubtless knew of other examples of church-megalith sites than those which have been adduced[3]. Such sites are said to be not uncommon in Wales. The church at Yspytty Kenwyn (or Cynfyn), near the Devil's Bridge, in Cardiganshire, had the circle of stones built, at intervals, into the churchyard wall. There were also stone pillars at the Eastern entrance to the church, just as they are sometimes found near stone-circles. Large megaliths are also recorded from the churches of Tregaron, in Cardiganshire, and Llanwrthwl, in Brecon[4]. Cordiner, an eighteenth century writer, asserts that Benachie church, Aberdeenshire, is built within a

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I. p. 399.
[2] Sir J. Norman Lockyer, *op. cit.* p. 219.
[3] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.* pp. 217–20.
[4] *Cambrian Jour.*, 1858, 2nd Ser., I. p. 205.

stone-circle, and that the practice of thus building was not infrequent in that country. And Mr W. G. Wood-Martin has recorded at least two cromlechs in Irish churchyards[1].

There is also a scrap of linguistic testimony which is pregnant of ancient tradition, and which has been noted by several writers. Sir Daniel Wilson seems to have been the first to make the fact publicly known. The common Gaelic sentence, *Am bheil thu dol d'on chlachan?* (Are you going to the stones?) may be rendered alternatively, "Are you going to the church?" and is used in this second sense by the Scottish Highlander when addressing his neighbour. Primarily, *chlachan* (*clachan*) means a circle of stones, hence, a battle, or the scene of single combats. The interpretation "place of worship," is, as might be anticipated, derivative, though not recent. So far back as 1774, Shaw, in the chapter which he contributed to the third edition of Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*, observed, "From these circles and cairns many churches to this day are called *clachan*, i.e. a collection of stones[2]."

A word of caution is necessary to those who may be inclined to accept too hastily, and without examination, the claims of this or that megalith to a great antiquity. For instance, there stands at the South-Eastern gate of Binstead church, in the Isle of Wight, a grotesque figure, called by the villagers "The Idol." This uncouth image has been thought by some to be a pagan object of worship. Little, indeed, is definitely known about the object, but it is asserted, with much credibility, that the gate once formed the door of the church, and that the image is merely a Norman keystone, or perhaps a corbel[3]. We note, however, that if it were a corbel, it could scarcely have been a portion of

[1] C. Cordiner, *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, 1780, p. 34; W. G. Wood-Martin, *Pagan Ireland*, 1895, p. 590.

[2] Sir D. Wilson, *Archaeology and Prehist. Annals of Scotland*, 1851, p. 10. See also T. Pennant, *Tour in Scotland*, 3rd edition, 1774, I. p. 274: chapter by Rev. Mr Shaw; C. Cordiner, *op. cit.* p. 34. Mr P. McIntyre informs me that, in conversation, *clachan* is employed, and, in that case, the question should be written, *Am beil thu dol d'an clachan?* The phrase is also given, with slight variations, by Lockyer, *op. cit.* pp. 219–20, and by H. N. Hutchinson, *op. cit.* p. 258 (Chap. XI., generally, of this book is worthy of study).

[3] G. E. Jeans, *op. cit.* p. 4. Cf. J. W. Hill, *Historical Directory of the I. of Wight*, 2nd edition, 1879, p. 130.

a doorway, though this matter is inessential. Our second illustration shall be given in order to show the danger of dating objects as pre-Christian, when they bear clear signs of Christian influence. In the churchyard at Penrith there is a large tomb which bears the nickname of "Giant's Grave." It happens that this name is often applied to prehistoric barrows and megaliths, and in this particular instance it has been proclaimed that the tomb is a cromlech—a "dolmen" being perhaps intended. Hutchinson, Pennant, and other writers, were greatly exercised concerning this ancient relic. But if the reader will turn to the beautiful engraving of the monument in the *Victoria History of Cumberland*, he will understand, even without the aid of the letterpress, that the tomb has features decidedly Christian. The monument really consists of the shafts of two pre-Conquest crosses, one being placed at the head and the other at the foot, while the space between is enclosed by three "hog-backs," one of which has been split longitudinally[1]. Once again, in the churchyard of Chadwell St Mary, Essex, a large sarsen, concerning which fantastic theories were current, was observed by the Rev. J. W. Hayes to have a weathered concavity, or "pebble-hole," within which were carved the letters "N. G.," followed by the date 1691. Referring to the parish register, Mr Hayes found an entry, made during that year, recording the death of a churchwarden, Nathaniel Glascock. The inference was clear, and the lesson of caution was delivered with some force. These reservations about the nature of burial monuments lead us easily to the subject of grave-mounds, to which we must allot a special chapter.

[1] W. G. Collingwood, in *Vict. Hist. of Cumberland*, 1901, I. p. 265. See also *Archaeologia*, 1773, II. pp. 48–53, where the tomb is said to be either British or Danish; *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, N.S. XIV., 1908, p. 205.

CHAPTER II

CHURCHES ON PAGAN SITES (*continued*)

OUR next task is to review the evidence, collected during many years of inquiry, respecting the mounds which are frequently seen in the neighbourhood of churchyards. Formerly, those archaeologists who gave any attention to this subject,—they were a very small band of observers,—contented themselves with grouping all the mounds as "barrows" or "tumuli." With fuller information, we are now able to classify the hillocks as (1) defensive mounds, (2) "moot-hills," (3) "toot-hills," and (4) true barrows, or grave-mounds. Etymologically, there is nothing which warrants the limitation of the word "tumulus" to a burial-mound, and, in actual practice, it is often loosely applied to any kind of mound whatever. To avoid confusion, however, it will be well, in this chapter at least, to refrain from using "tumulus" to describe those knolls, comprised under the second and third headings, which have not yet been proved to be of a sepulchral character.

Taking the groups in order, we deal first with the defensive mounds, known to archaeologists under a variety of alternative names: castle-mounds, moated mounds or mounts, mound-castles, and *mottes*. And it should at once be said that this group includes the majority of the examples which will be adduced. This result might have been anticipated, for these moated mounds are large and durable, and hence have escaped levelling by spade and ploughshare.

A few words must be devoted to an explanation of mottes or mound-castles. These hillocks were essentially low, flat-topped, truncated cones of earthwork, usually surrounded by a ditch, and placed in direct connection with a larger defensive

enclosure. The mound was generally artificial, either wholly or in part: the entirely natural mound is the rarest kind[1]. Of these natural hillocks, an illustration is found in the chalk "monticle" on which Corfe Castle is built (Figs. 13, 14). This mound need not detain us, because it is still crowned by the ruins of what was once a solid structure of masonry, built during the reign of Henry I. Of its true character there can, therefore, be no doubt. The castle-mounds which we are particularly considering, in their earlier forms at least, are believed to have supported a kind of wooden guard-house (*turris, bretasche*, or keep), which was surrounded by a stockade. Not until a later period of fortification, when the material of the mound had subsided and become firm and solid, did a structure of stone appear on the summit, if indeed, the wooden structure were ever replaced by a more permanent keep or fortress. Stone keeps were built on mottes at Kilpeck in Herefordshire, Fewston in Yorkshire, and other places, but this does not appear to have been the more general custom. Many mounds, at any rate, were never capped by a superstructure of masonry.

The castle-mound, as already stated, was encompassed by a moat, which probably, however, was not intended to contain water, except in special cases (Fig. 15). Yet it is very possible that "puddling" was often an undesigned result of the constant trampling to which the ditch was subjected. It should here be explained that the Norman-French term, *motte*, which is constantly applied to the moated mound, is not related to the word "moat," though, owing to a misunderstanding of the Latinized form, *mota*, it has often been so translated. Beyond the real moat, or ditch, was the larger enclosure to which reference has been made. This was the outer ward, the bailey or base court; it was of horseshoe or crescentic form, and was reached by crossing a wooden bridge. The bailey had its own moat, which, in its turn, was engirdled on the outside by a bank passing along the counterscarp[2].

[1] A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England*, p. 403 n.

[2] J. H. Round, in *Quarterly Review*, CLXXIX., 1894, pp. 27–57; E. S. Armitage, in *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* XXXIV., 1900, pp. 260–88: also a good summary by this writer in *Introd. to Eng. Antiquities*, 1903, pp. 119–124.

FIG. 13. Corfe Castle, as it appeared in A.D. 1643. This is a good example of a castle built on a natural eminence. The hill is almost encircled by two streams, which have cut deep valleys, and have nearly severed the mass from the main ridge. A deep, artificial trench on the townward side completes the isolation.

FIG. 14. Ruins of Corfe Castle, 1910.

This short description must suffice. The question which first arises is concerned with the age of the moated mounds. The older opinion, as expressed by Mr G. T. Clark, and to some extent accepted by later authorities, such as Mr I. Chalkley

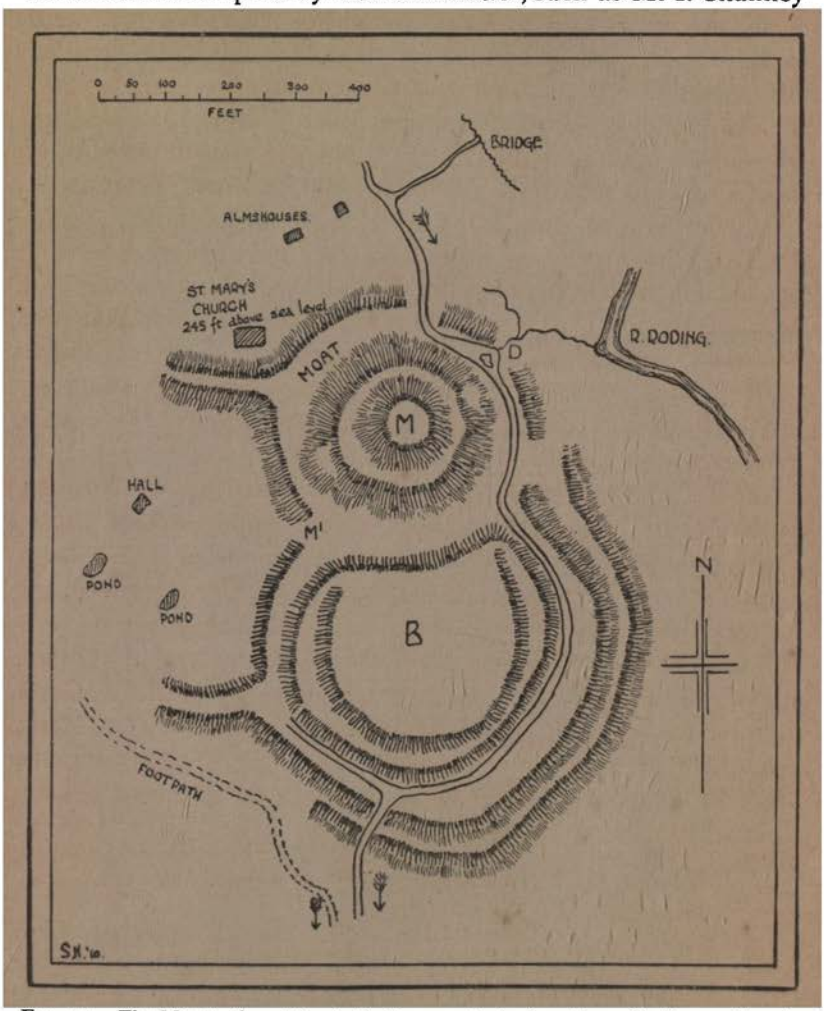

FIG. 15. The Mount, Great Canfield, Essex, a typical motte-and-bailey earthwork. *M*, motte, or castle-mound: the top of which is about 40 feet from the bottom of the moat. *B*, the bailey-court with its own moat. *D*, a dam, by means of which the water of the river Roding was probably utilized to increase the supply for the moat. The direction of the stream is shown by arrows. The parish church is seen near the North-West boundary of the motte.

Gould, was, that some of the hillocks, at least, were of Saxon date[1]. Mr Clark was largely influenced by the belief, which most modern writers consider erroneous, that the word *burh* of old documents referred to these castle-mounds. This word *burh*, however, is said to stand always for a fortified town and to have never been applied to a motte-and-bailey castle[2]. Among quite recent writers who assign some of the mounds to an early date, may be mentioned Mr Willoughby Gardner, who considers that, on a balance of evidence, the simple form of moated mound may be said to have originated in Saxon times. This view is also shared by Mr Reginald A. Smith. Again, Mr T. Davies Pryce has brought forward evidence to show that the moated mound belongs to diverse races and periods, and he contends that some mottes are of much earlier date than the Norman Conquest[3]. The trend of modern opinion, as enunciated by Dr J. H. Round, Mr W. St John Hope, Mrs E. S. Armitage, Mr G. Neilson, Mr A. H. Allcroft, and others, places the castle-mounds within the Norman period[4].

So far as the moated mounds are artificial and of Norman construction, they are extraneous to our inquiry about pagan sites; they are the feudal strongholds of which the village church was often the religious appendage. This relationship of fortress and temple will be forced upon us in the next chapter, and will continue to suggest itself when we discuss other matters. But if we suppose that the Norman mottes had their Saxon forerunners, or even that the Norman mound-builders took advantage of pre-existing knolls of an artificial character, we are led to search for vestiges of an accompanying Saxon church.

[1] G. T. Clark, *Mediaeval Military Architecture*, 1884, 2 vols., passim; I. Chalkley Gould, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VI. p. 134. Cf. Paper by this writer in *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1907, N.S., XIII. pp. 51–64.

[2] E. S. Armitage, *Introd. to Eng. Antiq.*, p. 120; *New Oxford Dict.* under "Borough."

[3] W. Gardner, in *Vict. Hist. of Warwick*, 1904, I. pp. 352–3; R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. of Northampton*, 1902, I. p. 256; T. Davies Pryce, in *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, N.S., XII. 1906, pp. 231–68.

[4] J. H. Round, in *Quarterly Review*, *loc. cit.*, and in *Commune of London*, 1899, pp. 52–4: also in *Archaeologia*, LVIII. pp. 312–40; E. S. Armitage, *loc. cit.*; W. H. St John Hope, in *Archaeol. Jour.* LXX. pp. 72–90; G. Neilson, *Scottish Review*, LIV. 1898, pp. 209–38; A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.*, Chap. xiii.

For, under these conditions, it is conceivable that we might have a Christian church built near a pagan mound. From the nature of the problem, satisfactory proof is difficult to procure. Certain moated mounds have yielded more than a hint of the adaptation by the Normans of earlier works. The flat-topped castle-mound near the churchyard of St Weonards, Herefordshire[1], has been claimed, on "the testimony of the spade," as having been a prehistoric grave-hill. This was the view held by Mr I. C. Gould. Thomas Wright, who opened this mound in A.D. 1855, declared that, "beyond a doubt," it had been used for sepulchral purposes, though the discoveries did not warrant his assigning its specific period. It may be mentioned that a decayed yew, of considerable age, together with other trees, adorned the hillock[2]. A similar defensive hillock, 50 feet in diameter, near the churchyard of Thruxton, Herefordshire, and known to the peasantry as Thruxton Tump[3], was also found to contain animal bones and pieces of crockery[4]. I can gather no details concerning the excavations of this last-named mound, and am inclined to accept the claims with great reserve, principally because other mottes have furnished similar relics, which have been proved capable of a more obvious interpretation. The first example of these supposed barrows is the castle-mound which is included within the present extended graveyard at Penwortham, in Lancashire. Careful sections cut in this remarkable hillock exhibited a profusion of remains, such as animal bones, mussel-shells, decayed timber, and objects of iron and bronze. These relics were disposed in layers, in such a manner as to show that the mound had been raised in height at two different periods[5]. Successive elevations of surface were also discovered in the moated mound adjacent to Arkholme church, Lancashire[6]. The castle-mound, again, at Warrington, situated about 100 yards from a church which stands almost within the fosse of the outer ward, has been raised more than

[1] I. C. Gould, in *Vict. Hist. of Herefordshire*, 1908, I. p. 230.

[2] *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, 3rd Ser., I. 1855, pp. 168–174; *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VI. p. 77.

[3] *Vict. Hist. of Herefordshire*, I. p. 231.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VI. p. 77.

[5] *Vict. Hist. of Lancashire*, 1908, II. pp. 533–6.

[6] *Ibid.* II. pp. 521–2.

once. The last occasion when the height was increased was during its occupation by the Parliamentary forces in A.D. 1643[1]. In all these cases the relics seem to indicate alterations which took place after the Norman period of mound-construction had set in. The bronze articles found at Penwortham, and the broken amphora which is recorded from Warrington, superficially suggest an earlier origin. But these relics were most probably scraped up with the soil when the motte was enlarged, or were picked up by the inhabitants somewhere in the neighbourhood, and were afterwards blended with the refuse-stratum of that particular period. These explorations, then, tend to discredit, in some degree, the statements made with respect to the Herefordshire mounds. At the same time, we must not rashly conclude that, in every instance, the workmen commenced their work on a perfectly level surface. The story of St Weonards teaches us caution. There were hundreds of early burial-mounds, as well as hillocks of other kinds, which may well have served as bases for mottes. An incidental fact, noted by Dr Round, is worth recalling. Moated mounds are to be seen in places where, so far as we know, the Normans never had a castle. It is clear that castle-mounds, with their appendant bailey-courts, were sometimes thrown up, and afterwards abandoned for other sites. Such a mound was raised by William at Hastings[2]. This opinion is quite accordant with what has been previously said about the absence of stone keeps on earlier mottes.

Seeing that the feudal baron dominated the village community, and that compliance with the claims of religion was deemed secondary only to the arrangements for personal security[3], one would naturally expect to find the Norman church not far distant from the castle-mound. And this is actually what one often sees: the church is either just outside the moated mound, or within the crescentic bailey-court. It would, I think, be an over-statement to assert, as do some writers, that the inclusion of the church within the entrenchments is typical of the arrangement of a Norman earthwork

[1] *Ibid.* II. pp. 539–43.

[2] *Archaeologia*, LVIII. p. 333.

[3] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 452.

castle[1]. True, the association is not infrequent, but it is doubtfully the rule. While the feudal lord would be able, by this plan, to concentrate the ecclesiastical and the civil administration of his estates, and to exercise keen supervision over his clerks and other dependants, he commonly had his own chapel (Fig. 16) and domestic chaplain within the castle itself. The disposition of the parish church would not,

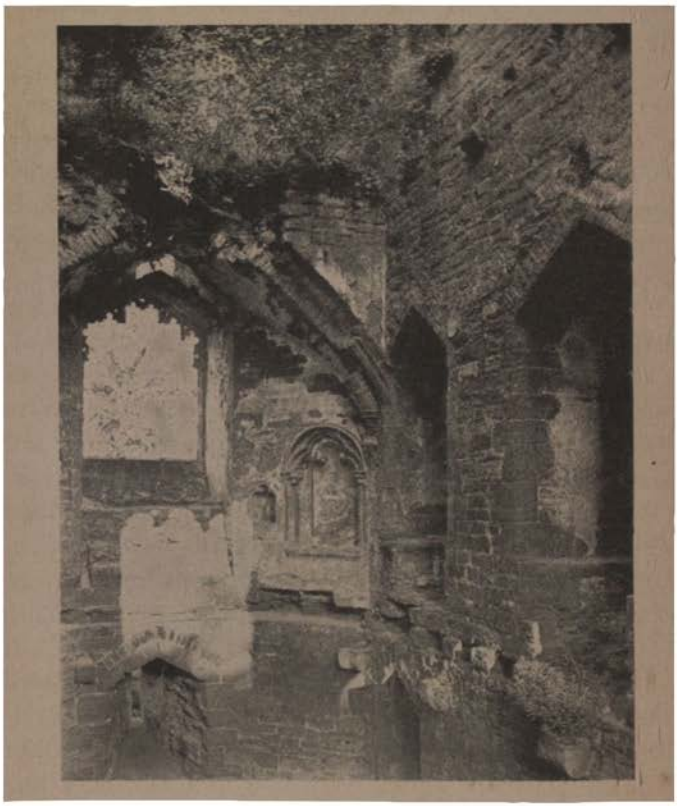

FIG. 16. Chapel, Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire (c. A.D. 1330—1450). The beautiful window tracery has been demolished, but below the opening on the right are a small piscina, and a trefoil-headed credence-table.

[1] D. H. Montgomerie, in *Vict. Hist. of Herts.*, 1908, II. pp. 117–8. In this connection see E. L. Cutts, *Parish Priests and their People in the Middle Ages in England*, 1898, Chap. xxvii. The manor-house long continued to have its chapel or oratory. See N. J. Hone, *The Manor and Manorial Records*, 1906, pp. 32–7. The private chaplain was a well-known personage in Addison's time.

therefore, solely depend on the lord's convenience, but would be affected by many other circumstances.

We shall now be equipped for steady work in eliminating all those examples of miscalled barrows, which are, in truth, castle-mounds. The path will then be cleared for an advance. Without pretending to give a complete catalogue, we must notice some of the better-known mottes. The hillocks at Barwick-in-Elmet, Yorkshire, Great Canfield, in Essex, and, possibly, Towcester, in Northampton, belong to Dr J. H. Round's group of mounds without castles[1]. The Great Canfield motte-and-bailey (Fig. 15, p. 54 *supra*) is a fine specimen. It is remarkable from the fact that a stream was diverted to provide the moat with water. Moreover, it seems likely that there was a dam on the North-East, by which the supply could be augmented from the river Roding. The interesting Norman church of the village lies at the North-West angle of the earthwork. Laughton-en-le-Morthen, near Rotherham, contains another noteworthy motte. We know that the church of the village contains some masonry belonging to the latter part of the tenth century[2]. Hence we are moved to ask, Was the mound also of pre-Norman date, or did the Norman settlers elect to rear their fortress near a spot already famous? In our next chapter, we shall touch on a matter which is of interest in this connection.

To continue the survey: we find that most counties afford examples of mottes raised near churches. Lancashire, in addition to the cases mentioned, contributes the Melling fortress to our list[3]; Yorkshire gives us another mound, that of Bardsey, from the district once covered with the Forest of Elmet. In Lincolnshire, we find Owston, where a portion of the ditch is still visible[4], and Redbourn, which has its Castle Hill, and traces of a moated area, often described by the older topographers. Buckinghamshire yields, at the village of Cublington, a somewhat unusual hillock, which is probably a moated mound,

[1] *Archaeologia*, LVIII. p. 333.

[2] G. Baldwin Brown, *Arts in Early England*, II. p. 340. Cf. I. p. 274.

[3] *Vict. Hist. of Lancashire*, II. pp. 529–30.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VI. p. 11.

constructed during the reign of Henry III. In immediate association with this mound, Mr Allcroft has found traces of the old village "ring-fence" (p. 16 *supra*), that is, an enclosure consisting of vallum and fosse, the former of which is supposed to have carried a stockade[1]. Professor Seebohm has recorded a mound near the church of Meppershall, in Bedfordshire[2], and another, known as the Toot Hill, at Pirton, in Hertfordshire[3] (cf. p. 7 *supra*). He was of opinion that the Pirton knoll was a place of observation, or watching-mound, but more recent

FIG. 17. Pirton church and Toot Hill, Hertfordshire, from the South-East. The portion of the ditch in which the children are standing frequently holds water. Further to the left, but out of the picture, a stretch of the moat is permanently filled with water.

inspection has led to its being classed as a Norman motte. This oval hillock covers more than an acre of ground. Its height is 25 feet, but there is a depression in the crown, caused by the removal of earth to fill in the inner part of the moat.

[1] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 548 n.

[2] F. Seebohm, *Village Community*, p. 434. Cf. A. R. Goddard, in *Vict. Hist. of Bedford*, 1904, I. pp. 296–7.

[3] Seebohm, *loc. cit.*

Mr D. H. Montgomerie states that the bank and ditch of the bailey-court may be distinctly traced in the churchyard[1] (Figs. 17, 18). Yet there must always remain the doubt whether an earlier mound was not enlarged and entrenched by the builders of the castle-hill. The nickname, Toot Hill, to be noticed shortly, gives a half-hint of such a reconstruction. The Penwortham and Arkholme mottes have taught us to scrutinize each example closely, and on its own merits. Anywhere we might expect to find the spade telling us of a castle-hill which conceals, within its substance, a British barrow, or a Roman botontine or *specula*. A botontine, it may be explained, was a

FIG. 18. Toot Hill, Pirton, Hertfordshire; a "moated mound." View from a point South-West of the church. The moat is seen at the foot of the hill, and it passes away to the right, behind the mound.

small mound which was heaped up by Roman land-surveyors, and in which were usually deposited a few scraps of pottery and a handful of ashes, or fragments of the bones of animals. A specula was an earthwork "watch-tower," if the expression be permissible. A slightly puzzling mound, situated a short distance

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Hertford*, II. pp. 117-8.

from Towcester church, Northampton, revealed coins and pottery which betrayed Roman occupation, yet these alone did not tell when the mound itself was raised[1] (cf. p. 59 *supra*). Again, the Castle Hill, at Hallaton, in Leicestershire, an earthwork of the mound-and-court type, yielded traces of British, Roman and Saxon settlements[2]. The Hallaton mound, however, is about a mile distant from the church.

A most interesting castle-mound, though of small size, is that of Earl's Barton, Northampton. The famous Saxon church of this village abuts on the South side of the motte, which has been peeled away, either to accommodate the tower, or for some other reason[3]. Mr Reginald A. Smith, who quotes an article written by Professor Baldwin Brown, in which a pre-Norman origin of the motte is called in question, points to the undoubted Saxon age of the church tower, and thinks, with Mr G. T. Clark, that the earthen stronghold belongs also to the Saxon period[4]. Swerford, Oxfordshire, again, presents a deviation from the normal churchyard castle-mound. Besides the motte and bailey-court, there is a subsidiary mound, guarding the entrance, together with two detached platforms towards the East. These may indicate different periods of construction.

Coming South of the Thames, we notice the castle-mound on the slope of the hill above Brenchley church, in Kent[5]. The Saxon church of Swanscombe, near Northfleet, which suffered severely from fire a few years ago, has an attendant mound on the hill by which it is overlooked. This earthwork, known as Sweyn's Camp, has a diameter of 100 feet, and its ground-plan, as shown in the *Victoria History of Kent*, suggests a somewhat earlier date than that of the ordinary motte-and-bailey group[6]. In the sister county of Surrey, a defensive mound is known to have existed near Ockham church, and some of the outlying banks have escaped entire obliteration[7]. Behind Abinger church, again, there is a hillock, which may be a motte, or perhaps a

[1] R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. of Northampton*, I. p. 256. Cf. II. p. 408.
[2] R. A. Smith, *op. cit.* I. p. 256; *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, VII. p. 316–21.
[3] *Vict. Hist. of Northampton*, II. p. 405.
[4] *Ibid.* I. p. 256.
[5] *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, 1908, I. p. 407.
[6] *Ibid.* I. pp. 208, 363.
[7] *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.*, XII. p. 162.

true barrow of the Bronze Age[1]. Dr J. C. Cox says that it is "obviously an ancient barrow," but it appears never to have been opened. We might proceed, county by county, and catalogue many further examples, but it would result in wearying the reader. One further instance only shall be given, and it chances to be that of a motte which diverges from the type. The Norman church of Kilpeck, Herefordshire, is built on the bank and ditch of a rectangular enclosure, which lies outside the curvilinear courts of a castle-mound. Possibly we have here a Norman fortification encroaching upon an earlier earthwork, and it should be observed that the church occupies vantage-ground strong by nature[2] (p. 52 *supra*). We must now dismiss the castle-mounds, though we shall be unconsciously compelled to revert to them hereafter.

Our second group of church-mounds comprises the "Moot-Hills." These objects, usually artificial, vary much in size, and are not confined to the neighbourhood of churches. The etymology of the word "moot" (O.E. *mōt*, M.E. mōt, imōt = meeting, public assembly) at once gives a clue to the uses of these mounds[3]. It was at spots of this kind, as well as at other places having characteristic landmarks, that the early open-air assemblies were wont to meet. Now, in the first place, we notice, as Sir G. L. Gomme has ably shown, that open-air courts have not been confined to one race or to one period[4]. Doubtless they are practically coeval with the formation of the primitive village community. To attempt to fix the precise date is foreign to our purpose, it is enough to know that open-air courts preceded the first preaching of Christianity in Britain. Near some well-known object, then, the men of the hamlet, the inhabitants of the forest, the warriors of the hundred, or the tenants of the manor, met to transact their business[5]. Sir G. L. Gomme has collected a mass of information concerning these meeting-places. We have seen (p. 34 *supra*) that monoliths, stone-

[1] *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.*, XII. pp. 155, 162; *Vict. Hist. of Surrey*, I. p. 250; J. C. Cox, *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, pp. 126–7.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Hereford*, I. p. 240; *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VI. p. 171.

[3] *New Oxford Dict.* under "Moot."

[4] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, 1880, Chap. ii. Cf. Seebohm, *op. cit.* p. 434.

[5] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 542.

circles, and ancient burial-places were much favoured as meeting-places. To this list must be added barrows, tumuli, and mounds[1]. There is no reason to impede our quest by stopping to enumerate examples, because the fact is now a commonplace. Besides ancient burial-mounds, "camps" also served for open-air courts. At Downton, in Wiltshire, there is a moot-hill about 70 feet high, rising in six terraces from the river Avon below. Despite any later alterations, it seems probable that the hillock was constructed within an earthwork of earlier date. In a small volume entitled '*The Moot' and its Traditions* (1906), Mr Elias P. Squarey, the proprietor of the Moot House, Downton, has collected all the available records about this interesting relic.

The old Welsh laws help us to form a picture of a gathering at a moot-hill. During a law suit, the judge sat on the circular mound. Below, on the left hand, sat the plaintiff, the defendant being placed on the right. The lord must sit behind the judge, and have his back to the wind or sun, lest he be incommoded. Mr S. O. Addy notes that, as the court was held in the morning, the lord must have sat towards the East and faced the West, and that, in this respect, the later indoor court was a copy of the outdoor court[2]. A word of reminder may be said concerning the annual ceremonies connected with the Tynwald Hill in the Isle of Man. Here we have an instance of a national assembly meeting on a hill to elect officers and promulgate new laws. No law was fully recognized until it had been proclaimed from this mound. The custom is still (1910) formally observed. Hard by is a small chapel, built on the site of an ancient church, and the present day gathering is heralded by a religious service, the procession to the hill being formed afterwards.

Some of the moot-hills, like that of Pirton (p. 60 *supra*), were Norman mottes, though possibly not belonging wholly to the Norman period. It is extremely probable, moreover, that some of the earlier mounds were either actual British barrows, or were tumps raised for the specific use of folk-moots. In other words, the first moot-hills would belong to pagan times,

[1] Sir G. L. Gomme, *op. cit.* pp. 62, 105, 106, 112, 215, etc.; R. W. Eyton, *A Key to Domesday*, 1878, p. 143.

[2] Addy, *Evol. of the Eng. House*, 1898, pp. 197–8.

and were therefore used long before the organization of the Norman form of the manorial system, or the establishment of Norman mottes. There is hence a likelihood that, where churches stand near moot-hills, those mounds may, in some cases, be assigned to the pre-Christian period. Nor would it greatly diminish this probability if it were proved that some of these hillocks were entirely natural in their formation. The force of the argument is derived from the fact that secular affairs and heathen ceremonies were connected with the mounds, and that it was thought wise to retain the bond by preaching the new faith from a building erected in the vicinity.

A pertinent fact was observed by Mr James Logan, a generation ago. He noticed that moot-hills were the seats of assemblies which afterwards came to be held in churches[1]. Further, he discovered that stone-circles were also formerly used for meetings: he thus anticipated the conclusions of later writers. One remarkable instance is given. So late as A.D. 1380, a Court of Regality was held "*apud le stand and Stanes de la Rath de Kingusie*[2]." Of the moot-hills proper, Logan found that these were often actually dedicated to saints. The Hill of Scone was known as the *Collis Credulitatis*. Here we have obviously a consecration due to the influence of Christianity. When, at a somewhat later period, the custom was introduced of holding the courts in churches, the clergy objected on the ground that the sacred building was not suited to such a purpose. A canon was issued forbidding the laity to hold such meetings within the church. These injunctions were frequently disobeyed[3]. Up to this point, Logan is a safe guide, and his theories can be justified by documentary evidence. He is supported, too, by comparative customs. Professor F. Kauffmann, for instance, states that the pagan temples of the West Teutons were situated near the places of judgement, where the Things, or popular assemblies, were held[4]. The "doom-rings," or stone-circles, of Iceland were used as judgement seats down to a late

[1] *Archaeologia*, XXII. p. 200. Cf. S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 178 (and authorities given).

[2] *Archaeologia*, *loc. cit.* Cf. *Archaeol. Jour.*, I. p. 154. [3] *Ibid.*

[4] F. Kauffmann, *Northern Mythology*, pp. 22–3. Cf. P. H. Mallet, *Northern Antiquities*, tr. Bishop Percy, 1847, p. 291 (Iceland evidence).

period. Thus far, Logan's view is corroborated. But when, misled apparently by the Christian dedications just referred to, he proceeds to argue that moot-hills were raised after the use of churches was disallowed, he exactly reverses the order of events. The stone-circles, according to his own presentment of facts, must have been reared for the same cause, and, similarly, at a late period. One suspects that vague ideas respecting the age of the megaliths led to a hasty conclusion as to the age of the moot-hills. The real history would be that the spots most convenient for folk-moots were most suitable for worship, and that consequently it was politic to build churches there. To what extent the moot-hills were originally sepulchral is, for the moment, inessential. That verdict lies with the labourer's mattock and spade, not with the theories of the student, who can only collate the records. To resume: little by little, as we shall find, secular business began to be transacted in the churches, and the primary purpose of moot-hills slowly vanished. One result, perhaps, was that the name "moot-hill," in some cases, got wrongly applied to mounds that had not been used for assemblies. This error probably sprang from the confusion of the moat (*mota*), belonging to the castle-mound, with the better known and already accredited "moot[1]."

That some of the moot-hills are actually barrows has been proved by excavation. Duggleby Howe, a moot-hill, or "rath," in the East Riding, was opened by Mr J. R. Mortimer for Sir Tatton Sykes in 1880, and was found to be a prehistoric grave-mound. The relics happened to be very abundant[2]. To show the fallibility even of conclusions based on the results of experimental diggings, another case, reported by Mr Mortimer, may be cited. Eleven miles from the Duggleby moot-hill is another hillock known as Willy Howe. The two mounds are exactly alike in size, shape, and other respects, yet, although Willy Howe has been twice opened, no skeleton has been encountered. Mr Mortimer, evidently anxious to point a much-needed moral, remarks, "Had the excavation at Duggleby been

[1] See instances given in *Jour. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, N.S. XIV., 1908, p. 208.

[2] *Trans. E. Riding Antiq. Soc.*, 1895, III. pp. 13–14; J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, 1905, pp. 23–4, 26–7.

no wider than that of Willy Howe, the two graves containing the primary interments would not have been found[1]." To compare small things with great, one may recall the boring and the tunnelling of the famous Silbury Hill. The toil was barren of results, and one feels that no really safe deduction can be drawn from this negative testimony.

Having admitted that some moot-hills are really mottes, it will be well to lay stress on the present contention that other moot-hills are of a date anterior to that of castle-mounds. If *mota* has been corrupted into "moot," the word "moot" itself has also suffered rough treatment. Mr Mortimer speaks of a knoll which perplexed the antiquaries, because it was variously known as Mud, Mude, and Mundal Hill. The real name proved to be Moot Hill, and, although no proper excavations have been made, a bronze celt has been dug up, along with Mediaeval relics, and Mr Mortimer believes that the mound is a British grave[2].

Again, though the castle-mound, especially when standing near the parish church, was convenient as a place of assembly, yet there is a danger in resting satisfied with this truth, and refusing to probe matters further. Mr Allcroft notices several examples of so-called moot-hills which are really castle-mounds, and notices one in particular at Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey, which is believed to be of this nature. He observes that this mound is surrounded by a ditch, which would be useless for a moot-hill, but would be fitting for a motte on which the lord's dwelling was built. He therefore concludes that in such cases the motte was degraded to a moot-hill[3]. This criticism is both acute and just, but does it cover the whole field? Moots are very ancient institutions. Is it not quite as likely that, in many instances, the castle-mound was an earlier moot-hill, and that the fosse was constructed when the turris was about to be built? And how are we to know, in the absence of proof to the contrary, that the fosse is not, in some cases, the encircling trench of a large round barrow, deepened for purposes of defence? More-

[1] *Forty Years' Researches*, p. 23 n.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 295. Moot-hills are also referred to on pp. lxxxv, 25–26, 261, 264, 294.

[3] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 523.

over can the plea of uselessness be valid against moot-hills, when we remember the frequent occurrence of circular trenches around these barrows and also around some megaliths? The trenches may, in some instances, have been incidental to the mode of construction. These are not idle questions. Some of the moot-hills of the East Riding seem to be grave-hills which were consecrated by making incised crosses on the chalky mound to a depth of several feet. The arms of the cross, in each case, are directed towards the cardinal points. Mr Mortimer believes that the carving of the symbol on the mound gave sanctity to the spot[1]. Frankness compels one to note that the local name for these sunken crosses is *bields* (= shelters), the underlying notion being that the trenches were originally dug as cattle shelters, and that they were made crosswise to afford protection from all quarters of the heavens. But this explanation could not possibly apply to other crosses, in low relief, formed of ridges of earth and stones, occurring on other ancient sites[2]. Nor is it valid for the intaglio crosses, since these were usually found to have been filled with broken bones and Saxon shards[3]. As shedding light on these strange discoveries, it may be noticed that, in old Saxony, an open-air tribunal was consecrated by digging a grave, into which were thrown ashes, a coal, and a tile[4]. In passing, we note that these moot-hills are often known alternatively as Gallows or Galley Hills, names which evidently denote places set apart for judicial executions[5]. The antiquity of such names may not be very great, and there is a possibility that the word "Galley" in some cases simply means poor and unfertile. Yet there are traditions that gallows stood on these spots, and both the word "gallows" and the thing denoted are ancient. The word is as old as Beowulf, and although hanging does not appear to have been a mode of punishment greatly favoured by the Saxons, it was not altogether unknown. William the Conqueror made provisions to restrict the practice of hanging, a penalty which,

[1] *Forty Years' Researches*, pp. 36, 388, 390.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 388–94.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 388.
[4] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, 1880, p. 86.
[5] *Forty Years' Researches*, p. 396.

curious to relate, was in his day thought more cruel than mutilation[1].

We have now reached this point: a moot-hill may be natural or artificial, and, if artificial, it may, or may not, be a burial mound. That the pagan Saxons respected mounds which they believed to be barrows is fairly evident. Thomas Wright has clearly shown that Roman monumental inscriptions not infrequently contain warnings against neglect of, or disrespect to, the tombs of the departed. Besides, therefore, the leaven of superstition, I consider that we must reckon with the probability of living knowledge, the result of direct transmission, possessed by those members of the population who understood debased Latin at the time of the Teutonic invasion. Some of the venerated mounds were employed as boundaries[2]. We shall find, at a later stage of our studies, that the half-Christianized folk were apt to resort to the barrows for the burial of their dead. Roads are even reported to swerve a little from their course to avoid a grave-mound. These clues are "light as air, but strong as links of iron." The pivotal fact to be remembered is that, wherever the church-builders found a reputed barrow at a spot not altogether unsuitable in other respects, they would recognize the sanctity of the mound, and would be enticed to accept it as a fit neighbour for the new structure.

A possible illustration seems to be afforded by a hummock which is in contiguity with the churchyard at Old Hunstanton, Norfolk. Canon A. Jessopp surmised that this mound was a moot-hill[3], but excavations, we are now informed, have proved

[1] *New Oxford Dict.*, under "Gallows" and "Gallows-tree." Cf. *The Anglo-Saxon Poems of Beowulf*, ed. B. Thorpe, 1889, p. 257; Sir E. F. Du Cane, *The Punishment and Prevention of Crime*, 1885, pp. 10–11; Sir J. Fitzstephen Stephen, *Hist. of the Criminal Law of England*, 1883, I. pp. 59, 458. Cf. P. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, 1892, p. 170, with regard to the expression *terra ad furcam et flagellum*. This expression is declared to have no connection with the lord's power to punish by gallows and whip, but to refer to base holdings, occupied by tenants who work with pitchfork and flail. See also letters from Prof. W. W. Skeat and others in *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., I. p. 458; *Ency. Brit.*, 11th edition, under "Gallows."

[2] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1884, L. p. 70; *Folk-Memory*, p. 166; T. Wright, *Hist. of Ludlow*, pp. 13–14, also his *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 1861, p. 326.

[3] *Nineteenth Century*, 1887, p. 57.

that the knoll is purely natural[1]. Accepting the correctness of this conclusion, one may yet reasonably retain the hypothesis that the mound was used as an open-air court. Both the early settlers and the later architects may conceivably have mistaken the hillock for a sepulchre. Our problem does not concern alone the character of the knoll, but the purpose to which it was applied. We have not simply to ask, Is the mound an artifact? but, How came the church to be associated with the mound? Were such an instance solitary, it would not be worth a moment's thought. Contrariwise, if the examples are numerous, as they undoubtedly are, we are not justified in dismissing them summarily and without reserve.

The third group of mounds placed in the vicinity of churches will detain us a still shorter time than did the second. The "Toot Hills" are frequently confounded with the "Moot Hills," both in name and nature. Often, indeed, a particular eminence would serve both purposes, and it would be difficult to define each class with distinctness. The Toot Hill at Pirton (p. 60 *supra*) is accepted as a castle motte, though it must have also been an earthwork watch-tower. Such outposts, or places of observation, have been employed by many peoples. Xenophon and Herodotus speak of the σκοπιά, or watch-tower, while Cicero and Livy use *specula* in practically the same sense (view-point or beacon). In Britain the toot-hills appear to have been utilized throughout the Middle Ages; perhaps, too, they did not fall into entire disuse until after the Peninsular War, but were employed, at intervals, in times of stress and danger. When they did not serve as rallying points, they were still valuable for beacon-fires.

The word "toot" is almost certainly derived from A. S. *tōtian*, to project, to peep, the allusion being primarily to the swelling or protuberance of the ground (cf. *tumulus*) and afterwards to the watch which was kept from its summit. Professor J. Tait has collected much interesting lore concerning the word. Thus, the word which in the Authorized Version of the Bible (Isa. xxi. 8)

[1] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 540. In this connection see W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, p. 28 n.

is rendered "watch-tower" was translated "toothyl" by Wyclif[1]. The Vulgate renders the term by *specula*. Mr Allcroft further connects the word "toot" with A.S. *tutta*, a spy[2]. The absurd etymologies once in vogue, such as that which associated "toot" with Taith, a pagan deity, are now relinquished. Among the variations and compounds of "toot" are Tout Hill, Tothill, Tutt Hill (near Thetford), Tutbury, Tothill Fields, Touting Hill, Beltout (Sussex), and others. Some of these are familiar to us as names of villages and districts. Sir John Rhŷs describes vantage-points in the Isle of Man, which are evidently the equivalents of our toot-hills. These knolls are called *cronks*, and they are found near churches. Thus, we have "Cronk yn Iree Laa," near Jurby, a name which signifies "Hill of the Rise of Day," or possibly, "Hill of Watch and Ward[3]." In Ireland an artificial hillock of this kind is called Moate-o'-Ward, or alternatively, a rath or Danes' Grave. In the popular mind, again, our English word has been associated with burial mounds and banked enclosures. For instance, a long barrow in Staffordshire is known as the Fairy's Toot. The Toot Hill at Uttoxeter was found to contain both Neolithic and Roman remains. Again, the quadrilateral earthwork at Toothill, near Macclesfield, is provisionally believed, as the result of spade-work, to be an early fortification.

Mr S. O. Addy, in his valuable work *The Evolution of the English House*, speaks of the presence of "Tout" or "Touting Hills" near parish churches, but, from his descriptions, it would seem that most of his examples are genuine castle-mounds[4]. In two features, however, the mound which is a toot-hill, and nothing more, occasionally differs from the other hillocks which we are

[1] *New Oxford Dict.* under "Toot"; Skeat, *Etymol. Dict.* under "Tout"; J. Tait, in *Class. Assoc. of Eng. and Wales; Ann. Rept.*, Supplementary Vol. II., 1909, pp. 1–3; *Home Counties Magazine*, IX. p. 315, X. pp. 75–7.

[2] Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 421 n.

[3] Sir J. Rhys, *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx*, 1891, I. p. 311. See also J. G. Kohl, *Ireland*, 1843, pp. 17–18.

[4] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 153. Cf. *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1873, XXIX. pp. 264–5, describing a "Toot Hill," which proved to be a barrow; cf. *Vict. Hist. of Stafford*, 1908, I. p. 377. Further evidence is given in *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1906, N.S. XII. pp. 249–54.

describing. One characteristic is the great size, as compared with barrows and mottes, and the other is the irregularity of shape, where the mound has been untouched by man. The writer's notebook contains an account of a visit to the Toot Hill at Little Coates, near Grimsby, in December, 1903. The church of Little Coates, which is probably of early foundation, though only the featureless chancel arch of the present building dates before the Perpendicular Period, is about one-third of a mile distant. This Toot Hill (Fig. 19) is a huge mound with an

FIG. 19. The Toot Hill, Little Coates, Lincolnshire. View from the North-Eastern boundary. The basal portion of the hill is entirely natural, and is now being excavated for sand. The upper portion, surmounted by the tree, has been modified artificially.

irregular ground plan, but the upper portion has an elliptical contour. It is composed chiefly of sand and sandy clays, which seem to belong to the late Glacial Period. A sand pit which was being worked at the base of one side of the hill, yielded broken and comminuted specimens of *Ostrea*, *Tellina*, and other marine

shells. Towards the summit, however, there were undoubted signs of man's work. A slight fall of snow had rendered discernible a shallow trench which encompassed the hill slope. One could also pick out, near the base, the radial ridges and furrows of some old-time plough, but even these had not quite obliterated the trench. A few small flint flakes were detected on a patch bare of turf. One suspects that this hill served both as a beacon and a watch-tower when the Humber and the North Sea were nearer the spot, and when Grimsby was represented by a string of islets lying amid the waters of a lagoon. This condition of the landscape is known to have prevailed during the early historic period. The capping of the mound covers, mayhap, the dust of more than one celebrity. Bones and earthenware were found at, or near, this spot a century ago, and soon after the visit just described skeletons were dug up in the sand pit. The ultimate fate of these skeletons, and their determinations, could not be ascertained. Perchance this toot-hill will remind the visitor of the cremation of Beowulf, and the mound which "the Weders people wrought on the hill," after the funeral-pyre which they had kindled had ceased to glow. We learn that the lamenting warriors raised

> "A howe on the lithe (=body), that was high and broad,
> Unto the wave-farers wide to be seen,
> Then it they betimbered in time of ten days,
> The battle-strong's beacon."

We pause for a moment to recapitulate briefly our records and results. Wherever a mound which is intimately associated with a church is of Norman or post-Norman construction, it tells of feudal convenience and the centralization of business; perhaps, too, of religious expediency, with more than a hint of the secular use of the church. In a lesser degree, this argument of convenience applies also to the Saxon nobles. One of the means by which a ceorl could secure thegn-right, was by building a church, and if he followed this method, it is probable he would prefer to erect the church near his dwelling. Again, the connection of churches with pre-Norman moot-hills or toot-hills, whether these were "blind" mounds or grave-knolls, suggests the deliberate choice of sites already famous. And if it be granted that the

Norman motte had, even by exception, a rudimentary origin in the Saxon period, reasoned selection is again indicated. A mound which was the seat of judicial and legislative assemblies would be so indissolubly linked with the religious ceremonies of the community or tribe, that the site of the future church may be said to have been almost predetermined.

The mounds which form our last series are the grave-hills or barrows. These features, when found near Christian places of worship, form such a critical test of intentional selection, that each record should be closely scanned. British examples of the barrow and the church as neighbours are not very abundant. In parts of the Continent, however, the records are so numerous and so obvious that they crave a more lenient inspection. Few European countries have been overrun by the invader during the last fifteen hundred years to the same degree as Britain. Churches have been pulled down and rebuilt, or they have been fired and deserted, and, long afterwards, restored. The surrounding churchyards have been trenched and dug far more intensively than the treasure-field of Aesop's fable. The spade has disturbed and distributed flints and shards, and any other primitive relics have been broken and scattered so many times that their original positions are unknown. Levelling has followed inequality, and, in some cases, the graveyard has been enlarged and a secondary dispersal of soil has been made. (The observations on burial shards in Chapter VII. should be read in this connection.)

We will start with some of the less-authenticated examples first. A mound, long thought to be a barrow, but now considered to be quite natural, stands near Woodnesborough church, Sandwich, Kent. No trenching of the mound, however, has been recorded. The late Mr T. W. Shore recorded several instances of churchyard barrows from Hampshire, but I am not aware that the true character of these particular mounds has ever been investigated. Thus, at Corhampton, a church of Saxon foundation is actually built on a mound, while at Cheriton, the church is not only placed on a hillock, but it is also adjacent to a permanent spring[1]. This collocation of church and spring, it

[1] *Jour. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1890, XX. p. 9.

may be remarked, will greet us continually. In the churchyard of Ogbourne Maisey, Wiltshire, a fine "tumulus" stands close to the river[1], and Mr F. J. Bennett, who records this example, informs me that there was formerly another mound in Allington churchyard, Kent. This last example, one is disposed to think, may have been an outpost of Allington Castle.

The next mound which deserves attention is situated just outside the North wall of the churchyard of Over Worton, Oxfordshire. It is a round hillock, and has a circumference of 198 feet. Except that it is tree-clad, it has the characteristics of the other round barrows of the district. The assertion has been made that the mound merely represents a heap of rubbish removed from the churchyard, but a living witness, whose memory covers the date assigned to its construction, denies this story, and states that the hillock was there previously[2].

With respect to a mound which I recently discovered in

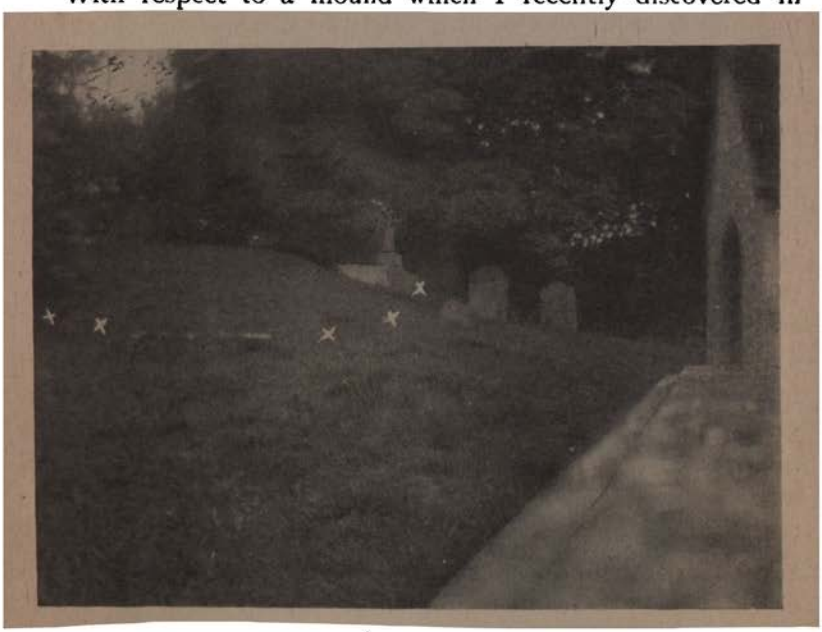

FIG. 20. Supposed barrow in Berwick churchyard, Sussex. The base of the mound is marked by the white crosses, and by the horizontal tombstone in the foreground.

[1] F. J. Bennett, *Sketch Hist. of Marlborough in Neolithic Times*, 1891, p. 11.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Oxford*, 1907, II. 346.

Berwick churchyard near Lewes, in Sussex, nothing is definitely known. This mound, which occupies the South-Western corner of the graveyard, and which stands but a few yards from the church, appears to be mainly, if not altogether, artificial, and is most probably a barrow. It is slightly elliptical in shape, the diameters being approximately 48 and 42 feet respectively, while its height is about seven feet. A large sycamore and a horse chestnut overshadow the hillock; the former tree is shown to the spectator's right in Fig. 20. On this side also, towards the base of the mound, a monumental cross is seen. In digging the grave beneath, it is said that hard chalk was soon reached, but this proves little, since the excavation was made near the foot of the hillock. No other graves have been dug in the mound. On the whole, and in default of actual trenching, I am disposed to consider this mound a true burial place. Its small size and the absence of an outer court seem to preclude the idea of its having been a defensive mound of the moated type.

A large barrow, hitherto unexplored, lies concealed in a wood near Ryton church, in county Durham[1]. Another knoll, bearing the name of Brinklow Mount, stands to the East of Brinklow churchyard, Warwickshire, and is believed to have been originally a grave-hill, though afterwards made to serve as a motte[2]. A low mound near Great Wigborough church, Essex, is reputed to be the burial place of soldiers killed in battle, but it is probably a true barrow.

One of the most interesting of these mounds, speculatively barrows, to be seen near London, is situated on the Northern side of Chislehurst churchyard, Kent. This hillock is surmounted by an altar tomb, the horizontal slab of which now rests on the plinth. No tidings can be gleaned respecting the origin of the mound. For reasons which appear to be satisfactory to the writer, and which will be considered at a later stage (Chapter VIII.), a knoll of this kind would scarcely be expressly raised over an ordinary grave or vault on the North side of the graveyard so early as the year 1712, the date when Caleb Trenchfield was interred in the mound. The fact that this gentleman did not

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Durham*, 1905, I. pp. 208, 363.

[2] *Vict. Hist. of Warwick*, 1904, I. pp. 353. 360–1.

belong to the ordinary rank of village folk would render burial in that quarter the more noticeable, since the practice of burial on the North side was then unusual. But a mound of this size would not be heaped up to cover a single vault. One would infer that, unless Mr Trenchfield left instructions for an extraordinary kind of burial, the mound existed long before, and had no connection with Christian interments. Mr E. A. Webb, the able historian of Chislehurst, has kindly supplied all the available

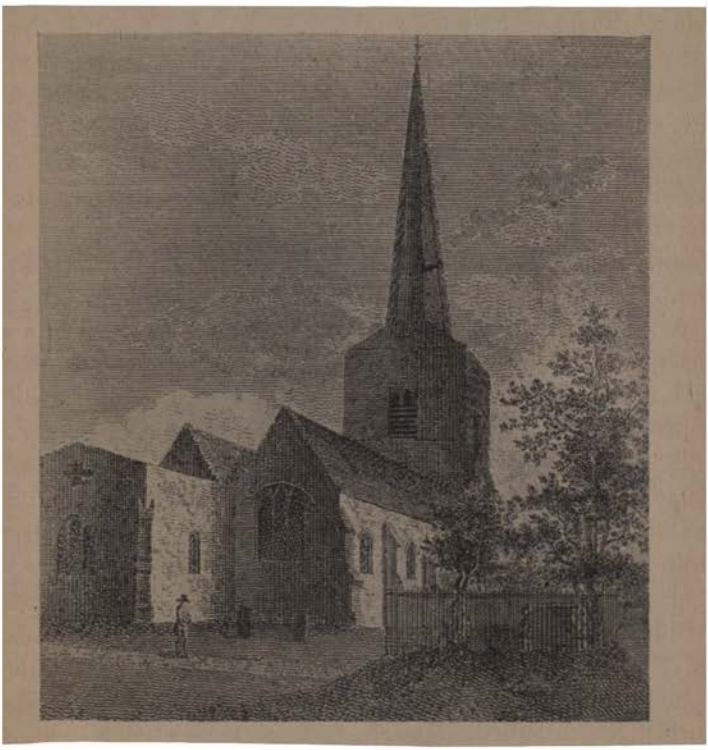

FIG. 21. View of Chislehurst churchyard from the North side, showing tumulus. (From a print in D. Lyson's *Environs of London*, 1795—1800.) Incidentally, the illustration shows the fewness of the tombstones on the North side of the churchyard, a century ago.

facts about the tomb. Two trees were planted on the mound, as the evidence shows, only a few years after the burial, in 1712. The growth of the trees first damaged and then broke the monument, and they were therefore cut down. Mr Webb

states that there is no record that the mound has ever been opened, save at the funeral of Mr Trenchfield[1]. An illustration of the mound and tomb as given by Daniel Lysons about the year 1800, is shown in Fig. 21. Pending further excavations, which are, however, not likely to be made, I should place the mound, with reserve, under the present section of our subject.

Near Bramber church, in Sussex, there is a group of "valley mounds," 27 in number. They are circular, and have a diameter of from 15 to 20 yards. Around each of these low eminences, which are flat-topped, runs a ditch. A group of 38 similar mounds is situated between Applesham Creek and Coombe church. Trial holes, which were sunk in 1908-9, under the direction of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Club, brought to light bones, a Mediaeval knife, and pottery which was assigned by Mr F. W. Reader to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The real nature of the mounds is still, however, undetermined.

We may amplify our references after glancing at the map of Yorkshire. Speeton church, near Bridlington, is said to be built on a tumulus[2]. Again, Mr Mortimer discovered that a burial-ground, or, at least, a barrow, lay beneath Fimber church, in the East Riding. His excavations, made in 1869, brought to light flint implements, pottery, shells, and human bones[3]. The vanished building at Chapel Carn Brea, in Cornwall, which stood on the crest of a conspicuous hill, is another instance of a church built on, or near, a sepulchral mound[4]. The neighbourhood of this last church abounds with antiquities, and traces of about 100 hut circles have been recorded[5].

Oftentimes, in places where no mound is visible in the church garth, the soil still holds relics which denote archaic interments. During the repairs which were made some five-and-twenty years ago, at the East end of Wyre Piddle church in Worcestershire, two skeletons were discovered in a sitting posture. The faces

[1] Cf. E. A. Webb, G. W. Miller, and J. Beckwith, *History of Chislehurst*, 1899, pp. 49, 52, 261.

[2] *Antiquary*, 2nd Ser., II. pp. 120, 160.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.* Cf. *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I. p. 360.

[5] *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, I. pp. 369-70.

were disposed towards the North-East. With the bones were found the remains of iron shield-bosses. A kind of rough pavement was also reached under the soil of the churchyard. The interments had been made prior to the introduction of Christianity[1], and a mound may once have marked the spot. From the churchyard of Llanbedr, in the Vale of Conway, a somewhat analogous find is recorded. Six feet below the surface, the sexton's spade struck a flat slab of stone, and underneath this was found a crouching, or kneeling, skeleton, surrounded by boars' tusks[2]. The district around is rich in British remains[3].

Some forty years ago, when the church tower of East Blatchington, Sussex, was being restored, an urn containing burnt bones and charcoal was discovered. The precise nature of the urn, and its after-history, do not seem to be known. Urns were also discovered during the restoration of Arlington church, in the same county, in the year 1892. Among the Saxon graves which have been disturbed by the modern sexton, two Kentish examples should be noted. In a churchyard at Faversham, the frontal bone of a human cranium and a Saxon tumbler of transparent green glass were dug up in the year 1853[4]. A bell-shaped cup of glass, ornamented with vertical ribs, was found associated with a skull and other human bones in the churchyard at Minster. The bones represented a skeleton which was computed to be eight feet in length[5]. Whether or not the burial-places at Faversham and Minster were ever capped with mounds must remain undecided. It is quite probable that a small "howe" of some kind marked the spot in each case. These Kentish discoveries add enlightenment in another direction. At a meeting of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, held at Norwich, in February, 1910, there was exhibited a polished axe which came from the churchyard of Gresham, in Norfolk. At the same meeting, Mr J. Cox showed a chipped celt which had been built

[1] *Repts. Associated Architect. Societies*, 1888, XIX. pp. 427–8; G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 263.

[2] *Nature Notes* (Selborne Soc.), 1907, XVIII. p. 223.

[3] A. and C. Black, *Guide to N. Wales*, 1900, p. 45.

[4] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1857, XIII. p. 313; R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, I. p. 385.

[5] *Archaeologia*, 1787, VIII. p. 449; *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, I. p. 385.

into Gresham church tower. Its presence there was most probably accidental, though it is well to recall the Breton practice of building stone axes into chimneys to ward off lightning. Mr Stephen Blackmore, the aged "Shepherd of the Downs," who has long been known as a collector of Neolithic implements, informs me that he secured an excellent polished flint hatchet from a depth of four or five feet in East Dean churchyard, Sussex. Again, in the Brighton Museum, there are displayed two fine flint celts, the one polished, the other neatly chipped. They were obtained from South Harting churchyard, Sussex. The chipped specimen came from a depth of three feet below the surface[1]. No further details can be gleaned, but, as the celts are of the types occurring in barrows of the Neolithic and Aeneolithic periods, one may suppose that the church is adjacent to the resting-place of some prehistoric chieftain. This is only a reasonable hypothesis, but the discoveries at Pytchley, Northamptonshire, in 1845, lie outside the domain of guesswork. The church was built in the early Norman period. Situated partly under the fabric itself, and partly under the present graveyard, a British cemetery was found. Although only a small area was excavated, twenty kist-vaens were uncovered. The Rev. W. Abner Brown, who described the graves, believed that the Norman builders were ignorant of the kists over which they placed their foundations, and that the stone graves belonged to Romanized Christians. It does indeed seem strange that pillars should be built over small hollow chambers; yet, interpolated between these chambers and the Norman graveyard, was still another burial ground, which had been used by the villagers long before the Norman Conquest. Again, while it is stated that the bodies lay East and West, "or nearly so," this alone does not prove Christian influence. A pre-christian date might be inferred from the relics, though these were few. Besides Roman coins and scraps of pottery, the scanty list of grave-gifts included a perforated tusk of the wild boar, and a rude amethystine crystal "eardrop." British earthenware was also found, and the whole of the data seem rather to point to continuity. We must remember that the surface of the churchyard once stood at

[1] Two stone axes have recently been discovered in Seale churchyard, Surrey (*S.-E. Naturalist*, 1910, p. xxxvii).

a lower level, and a narrow pathway of pebbles was actually found at a depth of six feet. The Norman architects, then, most likely knew that they were building over a graveyard of some kind, even as the Saxons may have been aware that their own cemetery was superimposed upon a still older one[1].

By far the best-known churchyard tumulus, and the one which has most successfully stood the test of exploration, is that of Taplow, in Buckinghamshire. A study of this barrow, which remains in the old churchyard of the village, near Taplow Court, will help to elucidate some of the other difficulties. The church itself is no longer visible, though its ruins remained on the spot until 1853. On clearing away the masonry, it was seen that the foundations of the building passed through an ancient ditch. The church had been erected at the Eastern end of an enclosure, the centre of which was dominated by the barrow. The whole occupied high ground, known locally as Bury Fields[2]. The folk-lorist will note, in passing, how valuable these philological details are, since names of this kind are not uncommon, and they generally seem to preserve the tradition of some actual event. To proceed with the description: from time to time fragments of pottery—British, Roman, and Saxon—together with well-worked flint flakes, had been collected on, or near, the surface of the village graveyard[3]. The evidence showed that the tumulus had been intentionally shut in when the boundaries of the churchyard were first fixed. At a later date, a yew tree had been planted on the grave-hill, and the trunk of this ancient tree was still in existence when digging was started in the year 1883.

Briefly, the following observations were recorded. Scattered throughout the uppermost layer of the soil, to a depth of two or three feet, the explorers found pieces of dressed chalk. These are supposed to have formed part of a Norman doorway, and were doubtless buried when the church was restored, or rebuilt, in the fourteenth century[4]. A confusing feature was the discovery,

[1] *Archaeol. Jour.*, 1846, III. pp. 105–15; D. Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*, ed. G. W. Hart and W. H. Frere, 1903, II. pp. 262.

[2] R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. of Buckingham*, 1905, I. p. 199.

[3] J. Stevens, in *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1884, XI. p. 62.

[4] R. A. Smith, *op. cit.* I. p. 200.

at various levels, of coarse pottery, bones, bone tools, hammer stones, flint flakes, and flint cores[1]. These objects were found "in larger measure at the top of the mound, but were at no time absent[2]." Yet, at the very bottom of the barrow, scraps of Samian ware and a portion of a Roman "brick" were exposed[3]. These Roman vestiges, lying at the lowest horizon, showed that the mound could not be Celtic. All the objects hitherto described might have been collected, along with the soil, from lower levels when the pile was raised. Are we driven to marvel at the surprising wealth of relics? If so, we must remember that the spot had some strategical importance, and had doubtless been occupied by Britons and Romans long before the occasion of the construction of the barrow. There is no necessity here to relate the engrossing story in greater detail, since this has been fully done by Dr J. Stevens and Mr Reginald A. Smith. It is enough to state that the barrow was heaped up to cover the remains of a Saxon chieftain. This was distinctly shown by the character of the grave-furniture—drinking horns, military trappings, utensils, and ornaments of Saxon date. The circumstances connected with this primary burial, as well as the relics, showed that the interment was of the non-Christian type[4].

For our next example we turn to the history of Ludlow. Down to the close of the twelfth century, the parish churchyard of that town occupied the site of a tumulus. In A.D. 1199, the barrow was cleared away, and there were disclosed sepulchral relics which pointed to a Roman origin. The clergy, however, declared that the remains were those of Irish saints, and thus turned the discovery to good account[5]. This ludicrous ecclesiastical fiction serves one purpose, and by good chance it speeds us in our present business. Through this tale we get a hint that the priests of the Middle Ages were inquisitive about the contents of barrows. Hallowed bones and mythical treasure formed the lure. Canon Jessopp has related numerous instances of this

[1] *Ibid.*; J. Stevens, *op. cit.* p. 63.

[2] J. Stevens, *op. cit.* p. 63.

[3] R. A. Smith, *op. cit.* I. p. 200.

[4] In addition to the references given, these may be noted: *Proc. Soc. Antiq.* X. pp. 19–20; *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, XXXIX. pp. 431–33, XL. pp. 61–71; *Antiquary*, 2nd Ser., II. p. 80; P. H. Ditchfield, *Our English Villages*, 1889, p. 23.

[5] T. Wright, *Hist. of Ludlow*, 1852, pp. 13–14. The mound near Eccleston church, Cheshire, seems to be a barrow (W. Shone, *Prehist. Man in Cheshire*, 1911, pp. 55–6).

Mediaeval "hill-digging" for treasure in the county of Norfolk[1]. Thomas Wright put the other side of the matter in a way which arrests the eye and ear of every modern antiquary, for he thought that he could adduce, from monastic legends, a hundred distinct examples of the opening of barrows to search for the bones of saints[2]. From this keen dissection of ancient burial mounds, we may infer that even the Mediaeval churchmen imputed sanctity to barrows, although the belief found expression in paradoxical acts of desecration.

In alluding to discoveries like that of Pytchley, we approached the subject of cemeteries, rather than that of barrows. A few instances of pagan burial-grounds lying beneath Christian churches may be cited. The oft-quoted case of St Paul's Cathedral does not properly fall under this head. It is true that, at various times, a number of ox-skulls and boars'-tusks have been discovered beneath the foundations. Tradition says that the cathedral stands on the site of a temple dedicated to Diana[3]. The legend may be fallacious, for the finding of a heap of animal bones scarcely warrants the assumption of a pagan temple, much less of a pagan burial-place. Rather is the indication towards one of those foundation sacrifices, which might profitably engage attention in another volume. Moreover, the site of St Paul's has always been a prolific field for Roman relics, hence it is within possibility that the bones are accidental items of a greater depository of rejected remains.

Other records, however, may pass unquestioned. At Lewes, in Sussex[4], and at Mentmore[5], in Buckinghamshire, churches have been built, if not on the actual sites of Saxon cemeteries, at least, very near them. With respect to the Mentmore interments, it is to be noted that those bodies of which the positions were recorded lay East and West[6]. According to the view, now

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, 1887, pp. 40–59.

[2] R. A. Smith, *Vict. Hist. of Hertfordshire*, 1902, I. p. 257.

[3] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, N.S. III. p. 205. The whole question is thoroughly discussed by R. A. Smith in *Vict. Hist. of London*, 1909, I. pp. 124–5.

[4] J. De Baye, *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, trans. T. R. Harbottle, 1893, p. 125.

[5] *Vict. Hist. of Buckinghamshire*, I. p. 198; De Baye, *loc. cit.*; J. Y. Akerman, *Remains of Saxon Pagandom*, 1853, p. xx.

[6] *Vict. Hist. of Bucks*, *loc. cit.*; *Archaeologia*, XXXV. pp. 379–82.

widely held, such a position indicates Christian burial, but, as will later be shown (p. 248 *infra*), the rule is by no means absolute. Unfortunately, the concomitant relics were so few as to yield little support to either theory. This difficulty is peculiarly noticeable in churchyard discoveries. Either the records date from the pre-scientific period of excavation, or, from the nature of the case, little modern exploration can be attempted. Thus, numerous relics have been dug up at various times near the West side of another Northamptonshire church,—that of Whittlebury. These relics comprise a bronze celt, Roman coins, an inscribed legionary tile, and several uninscribed tiles[1]. Such articles may suggest a burial-ground, or, at least, an inhabited site, but obviously no systematic excavations can be made.

Discoveries made at Alphamstone, in Essex, near the boundary of that county and Suffolk, and not far from the little town of Bures, deserve some attention. It has been a somewhat lengthy task to obtain the precise particulars relating to the discoveries, which date from the year 1905 onwards, but through the courtesy of Miss A. Stebbing, the Rev. P. Saben, and Mr Arthur G. Wright, the Curator of the Corporation Museum at Colchester, I am able to present an epitome of the finds. On a spur of the hill projecting into the valley, through which flows a small tributary of the Stour, there must have been a kind of cemetery belonging to the Bronze Age. The surface soil is underlain by sand, and this, again, by fine gravel. Workmen, digging for gravel, have, at various times, lighted upon urns, the bodies of which rested in the sandy layer. The specimens have now been secured, by gift or purchase, for the Colchester Museum. Through the kindness of the present rector, the Rev. P. Saben, a group of these urns is shown in Fig. 22, though it is doubtful whether these were all taken from one grave. With the vessels were associated numbers of white quartz pebbles, which occur naturally in the sand and gravel, but which may have been collected by the mourners who deposited the ashes in the urns (cf. p. 299 *infra*). The interest of these Alphamstone discoveries lies in the fact that, some 200 yards distant, on the same projection of the hill, the village

[1] *Vict. Hist. of Northampton*, I. p. 215. The Norman church of Fordington, Dorchester (Dorset), was also built over a Roman cemetery.

church was built. It has, indeed, been asserted that an urn was dug up in the churchyard itself, but of this I can obtain no confirmation. The late incumbent, the Rev. R. H. Anketell, for the loan of whose manuscript I am indebted to Miss Stebbing, strongly argued that the church was erected on a barrow, but Mr Wright's observations do not verify this hypothesis. A second discovery, however, was made under the church and in the churchyard during the recent restoration of the building. This consisted

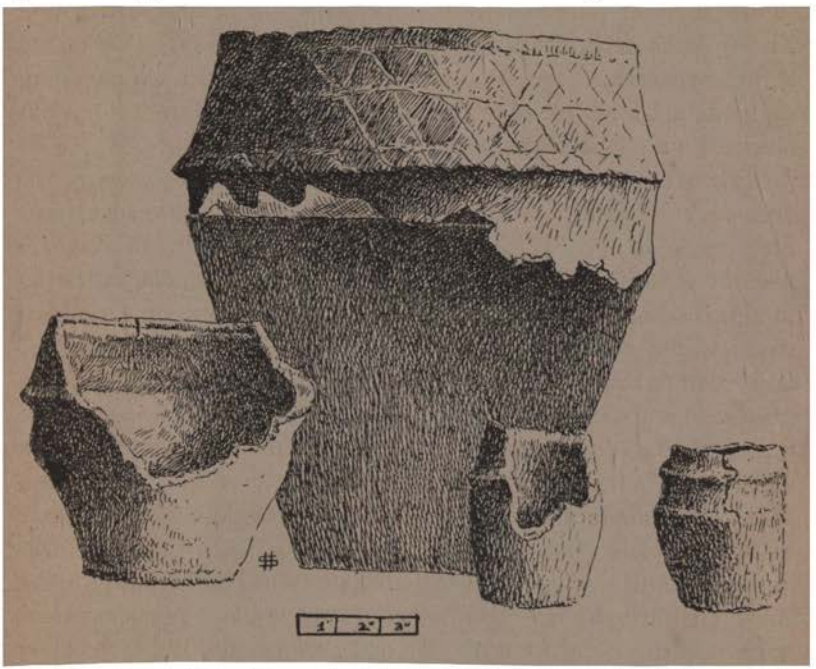

FIG. 22. Group of urns (Bronze Age) found near Alphamstone church, Essex. The large "cinerary urn," in the middle of the group, is ornamented with bands of cord-markings, which form a chevron-like pattern. On the left is a "food-vessel," of coarse buff-coloured ware, with overhanging rim. Of the smaller vessels on the right, one bears an incised trellis pattern on the rim, the other has vertical cord lines.

of a number of boulders, some vertical, others recumbent, pitted with what are popularly known as "pebble-holes." The stones were all devoid of tooling. The proximate origin of the stones was the Boulder Clay of the district. Two of the blocks were

found under the angles of the tower, two others came from beneath the chancel, while three were situated in, or near, the churchyard. It is also known that other specimens had been carried away in past times, for the purpose of repairing walls and farm buildings. Mr Anketell considered that the church had been built over a stone-circle, but one must hesitate a little before yielding assent. The group of stones may represent a portion of the builder's stock, yet we must interpret the discovery by the light of similar occurrences. It should be added, as establishing another bond of continuity, that Roman pottery is turned up from time to time in the neighbourhood.

In pondering the foregoing examples, we ought frequently to call to our aid comparative customs in more remote parts of the British Isles. Taking Ireland, for instance, it will be seen that that country is fertile in the kind of evidence so deplorably scanty in those portions of Britain which have been most disturbed and overrun by the spoiler. One instance alone, as related by Mr W. G. Wood-Martin, will exemplify the difference in the quality of the evidence. In the graveyard of the very early church at St John's Point, co. Down, there were discovered numerous pagan graves arranged in a circle. Within this series, and arranged concentrically, was another ring of smaller graves, while the common centre was marked by a stone pillar[1]. After this concluding example, we may sum up this side of the evidence. Occasionally, it must be admitted, the juxtaposition of pagan and Christian burials may be the result of coincidence. Pre-Christian burials are so abundant and so widely scattered that, by chance, the church builders may have stumbled on a forgotten cemetery. But this explanation will not cover the whole of the cases. While it may be urged, with respect to the Alphamstone cemetery, that there was probably a break in continuity, due to the slackening of folk-memory, the objection is manifestly irrelevant to the Taplow barrow, which must have been a conspicuous object when the foundations of the church were being laid. Even with examples of the Alphamstone type, there is the witness of

[1] W. G. Wood-Martin, *Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland*, 1902, II. p. 313. Cf. *Pagan Ireland*, p. 590 et seqq.

tradition and superstition to be heard. The salutary respect which was paid to the dead by primitive folk, and the superstitious beliefs, cherished, half in fear, half in hope, were centred around burial-places. These are facts to be graven on the tablets of the memory of every archaeologist. Realizing how potent, even to-day, are the traditions of ghosts, and fairies, and hidden treasure, wherever the dead are known to lie, and remembering that folk-memory has frequently proved to be sound in the identification of graves previously overlooked by the antiquary, we are bound to conclude that nothing short of the extermination of the whole of the inhabitants of a country-side could completely wipe away such recollections. Even to-day, after several centuries of the printed book, and several decades of the day school, the most definite legends, and those with the greatest living force, are those which the peasant connects with graves and ghosts. How much stronger was this kind of tradition when delivered orally from father to son, and when all folk alike were under the spell of superstition!

If it be objected that the majority of Gothic churches, perhaps even the majority of existing Saxon churches, do not stand near pagan burial-grounds, that the general rule was to establish new cemeteries at a distance from the old, one would naturally answer that it is just these exceptions which prove that the chain of continuity was never absolutely broken. The examples where old sites were seized upon might, at first, be relatively numerous, but they would tend to become fewer and fewer, as adherence to ancient heathen custom weakened. A time would arrive when, save to combat a prejudice, the pagan spots would be completely shunned, and all churches would be built on soil newly hallowed. The evidence must be judged as a whole, and especial weight will have to be allowed for the records of holy wells, which we must review before closing the chapter. A combination of features will often impress the most sceptical. When we find, hidden away in a wilderness of moors and hills at Bewcastle, in the Northern corner of Cumberland, the remains of a Mediaeval castle close to a restored twelfth century church, while the shaft of a seventh century cross stands hard by, and when we notice that a Roman camp of hexagonal outline—a rare feature—

encloses all these objects[1], we are justified in tracing a causal connection. What, but deliberate purpose, conspired to make warrior, churchman, and feudal lord, one after the other, settle in this remote fastness? Confronted with testimony of this kind, the burden of proof must rest upon those who would see, here and there, a distinct hiatus in the history of social development. A parallel may be drawn from the science of organic evolution. Recent researches have taught us that we must be prepared to encounter "mutations" in the lines of descent. It is also undeniable that ethnology may present us with similar mutations, caused, for instance, by the advent of a conquering race or a new religion. The fresh factor may produce either an exaltation or a retrogression, nevertheless, the general external and internal aspects of folk-custom will, for a long time afterwards, suffer little alteration, and the movement which is visible at the surface will not influence the undercurrents of belief to a corresponding extent. If the modification of the outward signs may be incautiously exaggerated, the strength of the unseen movements of belief may be carelessly deemed exhausted, when, in truth, it has scarcely waned at all. The hidden pagan forces which exist in England to-day, though they are normally kept in check by conventional habits and national religion, are well known to the professed student of survivals, while they are largely ignored by the orthodox historian. On the whole, then, experience teaches that the introduction of an alien religion does not interpose an impassable gulf between the old and the new, but that there will follow gentle transitions in custom, probably masked, for the time, by local outbursts of fanaticism or by the apparent sudden conversion, in certain districts, of large masses of the people. Beneath these disquieting superficial symptoms, there runs, in the main, an unbroken sequence of life and custom.

The present place seems convenient for expressing a warning against certain false appearances which an old graveyard may present. Often the area has been girdled with a trench, several

[1] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1908, N.S. XIV. pp. 206–8. The cross is illustrated and discussed in *Vict. Hist. of Cumberland*, 1901, I. pp. 254–7; J. Nicolson and R. Burn, *Hist. and Antiquities of Westmorland and Cumberland*, 1777, II. pp. 478–9; W. Hutchinson, *Hist. of Cumberland*, 1794, I. p. 80 et seqq.

feet in depth, in order to afford greater protection against the intrusion of cattle than could be provided by a railing or a stone wall alone. By this means, too, the animals are prevented from browsing upon evergreen hedges where these are planted. This double barrier is especially necessary when the church is in the neighbourhood of a park, in which deer are kept. The wall-and-ditch arrangement, or even the ditch only, is common in the West country, though it is not infrequent in other districts. To allow the entrance of worshippers to the churchyard, and at the same time to baulk the efforts of cattle, a single block of stone, or a "grid" composed of two or three narrow slabs, set edgeways, is placed across the trench to form a bridge. A subsidiary purpose of the ditch is that of drainage. Or again, where the ditch is absent, rude stone pillars, sloping outwards from the base, serve as a strait gateway. All these features may suggest to the unwary a simple system of fortification. Moreover, one may often trace, in the vicinity of the church, vestiges of earthen banks, the remains of the boundaries of a Mediaeval village (cf. p. 16 *supra*). Thus there is a double possibility of deception. A dry ditch does not necessarily denote antiquity. A favourite method of setting about the enclosure of an estate or the establishment of a coppice was to construct a trench along the proposed limits, and this mode of delimitation seems also to have commended itself occasionally to the churchmen of old. This practice, I am inclined to think, accounts for the "moat," now filled up, which formerly encircled the churchyard at Tooting, in the South-West of London, about two miles distant from the place where these lines are being written. Yet the late Mr T. W. Shore, the well-known archaeologist, suggested that the church had been built within a small British earthwork[1]. The position of the church, at the foot of a steep hill, seems to negative this theory, and to point to a later period, when the Church had quite triumphed over paganism.

[1] T. W. Shore, *Archaeol. Remains of Streatham, Balham and Tooting*, 1903, p. 20. In connection with entrenched woodlands, notice Caesar, *De Bell. Gall.*, v. c. 21, '*Oppidum autem Britanni vocant, cum silvas impeditas vallo atque fossa munierunt*' (when the Britons have fortified a tangled woodland with rampart and ditch, they call it a town).

There is a still more seductive danger to entice the credulous investigator who, having heard of churchyard tumuli, would fain see barrows everywhere. Many churches have the appearance of standing on artificial hillocks simply because, for a score of generations, the surface of the ground has been continually raised by a succession of interments. The effect is most marked where the graveyard is of limited area, and is held up by strong containing masonry. The soil has long been confined within a definite space, and the turf is now almost on a level with the coping of the walls. The curvature of the surface and the bulging walls tell the rest of the story. Near the fabric, the feet of the visitor are almost in a horizontal plane with the sill of the Early English or Decorated window, so that a trench, lined with concrete, has been cut to preserve the walls from damp. The interpretation is obvious. The building, instead of being perched on a knoll, is actually in process of being sunk within a hillock which has grown up around it. Let us revert for an instant to the concealed pathway which was found six feet below the present surface at Pytchley churchyard. One imagines that this difference of level may sometimes be considerably exceeded. Huxley tells us that the skeleton of a full-grown man weighs, on the average, 24 lbs.[1] According to the analyses of bone made by Berzelius, 67 per cent. of this weight—roughly, 16 lbs.—consists of mineral salts which are practically indestructible[2]. Though the actual bulk of this residue is small, we must add to it the miscellaneous materials of the more permanent parts of the funeral furniture. This latter factor would become important after the use of coffins had spread to all classes of village folk.

Among the most striking examples of elevated graveyards which have come under my notice are those at Telscombe and Rottingdean in Sussex; Brighstone or Brixton, in the Isle of Wight; and Milton Lilbourne, in Wiltshire. Various writers have noticed a like feature in Breton and Basque churchyards. After perusing these records afresh, two passages from the writings of observant travellers come to mind. The first is from

[1] T. H. Huxley, *Elem. Physiology*, 1885, p. 365.
[2] Chambers's *Encyclopaedia*, Art. "Bone."

Peter Kalm, the Swede, who visited England in 1748. He noticed that the floor of the English church often goes deeper down than the surface of the churchyard soil. From this, he inferred either that the church had sunk, or that the earth of the churchyard had been raised, owing to burials; unless, indeed, soil had been brought to the spot. William Cobbett's *Rural Rides* affords a strong corroboration of the facts. Cobbett's keen eye missed little, and his quick intuition sometimes—by no means always—suggested the correct explanation of features which more careless tourists would have overlooked altogether. The passage refers to the village of Rogate, near Petersfield in Hampshire, and his remarks are so apt that a full quotation may be pardoned. The letter is dated 12 November, 1825. "When we came to the village of Rogate, I saw a little group of persons standing before a blacksmith's shop. The churchyard was on the other side of the road, surrounded by a low wall. The earth of the churchyard was about four feet and a half higher than the common level of the ground round about it; and you may see, by the nearness of the church windows to the ground, that this bed of earth has been made by the innumerable burials that have taken place in it. The group, consisting of the blacksmith, the wheelwright, perhaps, and three or four others, appeared to me to be in a deliberative mood. So I said, looking significantly at the churchyard, 'It has taken a pretty many thousands of your forefathers to raise that ground up so high.' 'Yes, sir,' said one of them[1]." Cobbett then proceeds with a little socratic questioning of the villagers, in order to point a political moral, but with this we are not concerned. As he trots off on his nag, however, he begins to estimate how many hundreds of years a church has stood on the spot, and here our musings may be in accord with his once more.

Having passed in review those churches built on Roman sites, and those which are associated with earthworks, megaliths, and burial places, we deal next with churches which stand near sacred wells. The testimony which falls into this class yields

[1] P. Kalm, *Acct. of his visits to England* (1748), trans. J. Lucas, 1892, p. 42; W. Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, ed. Pitt Cobbett, 1886, II. p. 15. Cf. *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., II. p. 126.

the most satisfactory, as well as the most ample, proof of the bequest of pagan sites to the Christian community. At the outset, it must be admitted that the juxtaposition of a sacred spring and a church does not, in every case, prove the adoption of a purely pagan site of primitive repute. Throughout the Middle Ages pilgrimages to hallowed wells were approved by the Church. Nevertheless, the custom had a pagan origin, and undoubtedly, the sacred spring was visited long before it was appropriated, and perhaps enclosed, by church folk.

The literature of holy wells is, if scattered, rather extensive, and the various customs connected with well-dressing, with the offering of gifts to the divinity of the waters, and with the belief in sympathetic magic, are familiar to most folk. Here, an enraged peasant thrusts a number of pins into a wax doll, and throws the object into the spring, fully believing that his enemy will be injured in that part of the body which corresponds to the pierced portion of the image. There, a well is overhung by an immemorial thorn, which is decorated with parti-coloured rags, —offerings which are reputed to relieve the devotee of his sickness. Yonder, the muddy bottom of the spring hides a number of pins and copper coins, the humble oblations of the ignorant.

The superstitions referred to are most rampant in Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall, but they still survive also in remote parts of East Anglia, Yorkshire, Northumberland, and other districts. Perhaps the best known English examples of holy wells are at Tissington, Derbyshire (cf. p. 16 *supra*). At this village there are several wells, or rather fountains, but the most celebrated gushes out of the hill below the parish church. On Ascension Day, a kind of floral mosaic, designed on a framework, is placed over this fountain. After this has been done, a religious service is held. From statements made by various writers, it would appear that, of old, the ceremony took place on May Day, and that flowers and fruits were preserved long beforehand for this festival, which at its inception was essentially pagan[1]. One need scarcely insist on the other evidence which marks May Day as a heathen feast, but it would be advantageous to recall the fact

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., III. pp. 456–8, IV. p. 72.

that well-worship was practised by the ancients. Classical writings contain many allusions to the decoration of wells with garlands, to the flinging of nosegays into fountains, to the veneration paid to the nymphs of springs and streams. Now, as in the case of megaliths and tumuli, springs which already had a great reputation would appeal strongly to the Christian missionaries. By annexing a site which was accounted holy, the apostles would secure that gentle transition of ideas which the times demanded. The spring would, of course, be re-dedicated. There would also be the subsidiary motive of advantage. A church built near a perennial spring would always have a supply of water for baptismal purposes, or for the washing of vessels. Indeed, after the lapse of centuries, this secondary reason would doubtless be advanced as having alone determined the choice of site.

St Patrick and his followers, who, we are told, almost invariably chose heathen sites for their churches, did not neglect the sacred wells. Once, at least, St Patrick preached at a fountain "which the Druids worshipped as a god[1]." One illuminating custom must be noted. At the well of Tubberpatrick, in the parish of Dungiven, co. Derry, the devotees of the well, after having uttered their prayers and washed themselves in the waters, hang up their rags on a neighbouring bush. Then they proceed to a standing stone below the church, repeat their prayers, walk round the stone, and bow themselves. Next, they enter the church, where a similar ceremony takes place. Finally, they return in procession to the upright stone. This account is given on the authority of Mr W. G. Wood-Martin, to whose valuable works on Ireland the reader is referred. We pass on to notice that Sweden is similarly rich in tradition. Professor O. Montelius asserts that offering wells are frequently found near stone-circles, just as these are often met with in the neighbourhood of churches (cf. p. 28 *supra*). Some of these wells have received tributes in recent times[2].

[1] W. G. Wood-Martin, *op. cit.* II. p. 47, and generally pp. 46–115; also his *Pagan Ireland*, pp. 157–164, and especially p. 160; J. Bonwick, *Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions*, 1894, pp. 240–1; W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, pp. 2–3.

[2] O. Montelius, *Civilization of Sweden in Heathen Times*, tr. F. H. Woods, 1888, p. 200 n.

Scotland does not appear to have been pre-eminently noted for well-worship. Sacred wells have, however, been recorded as existing near the churches of Little Dunkeld, in Perthshire, Musselburgh, Strathfillan, and many other places[1]. Perhaps some of our best illustrations of the well-cult are derived from Wales. We will note, in passing, Sir G. L. Gomme's conclusions, which he based on a large number of observations, respecting the wells of Ireland and Wales. In Ireland, the highest point reached by the primitive cult of well-worshippers was to identify the deity as a rain-god, while in Wales the tradition centred around a guardian spirit. A few Welsh examples may now be briefly noted. A famous spring is that of St Tecla, Virgin and Martyr, situated about 200 yards from Llandegla church[2]. Sir John Rhŷs records the well known as Ffynnon Beris (*Ffynon* = well), near the parish church of Llanberis, and the healing waters of Ffynnon Faglan (= Baglan's Well), close to the church at Llanfaglan, in Carnarvonshire[3]. This authority has also shown that, in some instances, there existed, until late times, a guardian of the well, though whether the "priesthood" was acquired by inheritance or otherwise could not be ascertained. Thus, at St Elian's Well, near Llanelian church, in Denbighshire, a "priestess" had charge of the well so late as the close of the eighteenth century. At the healing well of St Teilo, hard by the ruined church of Llandeilo Llwydarth, in North Pembrokeshire, the calvaria of a skull, reputed to be that of St Teilo, was, even within our generation, handed to the patient. With this strange cup he secured a draught which was warranted to cure whooping-cough. The adjacent churchyard, it may be observed, contains two of the oldest post-Roman inscriptions in the Principality. Sir John Rhŷs thinks that the well was probably sacred before the days of St Teilo, and that its ancient sanctity was one of the causes which decided the choice of the ground for the erection of the church. The faith in the well remains intact while the church walls are in utter decay. Well-paganism has annexed the saint, and has established a belief in the efficacy of the skull in well-ritual[4]. From North Pembrokeshire we turn to

[1] G. S. Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, 1899, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Sir J. Rhŷs, *Celtic Folk-Lore*, 1901, I. pp. 363–4, 396–7.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 397–400.

South Pembrokeshire, to that district known as "Little England beyond Wales," which presents so many interesting problems to the ethnologist and the archaeologist. It was in the year 1898 that Mr A. L. Leach, whose careful researches in this district are now familiar to many, first pointed out to me the interesting chalybeate springs in the churchyard of Gumfreston, near Tenby. The waters were reputed to have great medicinal virtue[1], and there can be little doubt that the existence of the springs proved an inducement to the church builders. The church itself, and the entire surroundings, will be found worthy of retrospect later.

We pass across to the Marches and find the holy church wells almost as numerous in Western England as in the Principality. In the county of Salop alone we have examples at Donington, Stoke St Milborough, Ludlow Friary, and Wenlock Priory[2]. In the Midlands, we notice St Chad's Well at Lichfield[3]. Journeying Southwards through Gloucestershire, we observe that the ruined churchyard cross at Bisley covers an old well, which is now, however, reported to be dry[4]. As we traverse Somerset, we have our attention called to the holy well near which stands the church of St Decumen, at Watchet. Some remote prototype of this church is reported to have existed here so early as the year A.D. 400[5]. Another Somerset example is that of St Agnes' Well, near Whitestaunton church. The well is said to be tepid and to possess healing properties. Professor Haverfield states that, close at hand, a Roman villa was uncovered in the year 1845, when abundant relics were found[6]. Instances such as this speak eloquently in favour of continuous site-occupation. Still keeping to Somerset, we have the well of St Aldhelm below the churchyard of Doulting. The church is dedicated to the same saint. So recently as 1910, I found that the spring, which is the source of a small stream, still retained a hold in local story, the waters being declared good for rheumatism.

[1] A. L. Leach, *Guide to Tenby*, 1898, p. 66.
[2] G. S. Tyack, *op. cit.* p. 15.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] F. J. Haverfield, in *Vict. Hist. of Somerset*, 1906, I. p. 334.

The numerous holy wells of Cornwall have been sufficiently described by Mr R. C. Hope and the Rev. S. Baring-Gould[1], so we retrace our steps, and, travelling Eastward, observe the spring which, traditionally connected with St Augustine, flows from the North-East corner of Cerne Abbas churchyard, in Dorsetshire[2]. Hampshire, as the late Mr T. W. Shore discovered, has its Itchenswell, Maplederwell, and Holybourne. The last name is very significant, the more so as the spring issues from below the village churchyard. The permanent spring near the churchyard at Cheriton has been noticed (p. 74 *supra*), while, at another Hampshire church, that of Hambledon, a "bourne" or "lavant," that is, an intermittent spring, gushes forth at intervals[3]. In Surrey one of these bournes is thrown out by the side of Merstham churchyard. The overflow of the bourne waters is traditionally believed to be a portent of evil. Near the church of Carshalton, also in Surrey, there is a well, now covered in, known locally as Anne Boleyn's Well. The legend runs that the horse which carried that lady struck the ground with its hoof, thus turning "the flint stone into a springing well." The story is evidently an afterthought, a late attempt to explain the association of the church and the spring.

London itself might not be expected to yield much testimony to this romantic portion of our study. Yet several London churches had their wells. Hard by St Giles's churchyard there was formerly a pool, and near Clerkenwell church was the celebrated "Clerkes' Well" which is believed to have given the parish its name. At the Skinners' Well "the skinners of London held there certain plays yearly, played of Holy Scripture." St Clement's Well, Holywell Street, Strand, near the parish church of the same name, was "fair curbed with hard stone, kept clean for common use, and [was] always full[4]." Rapidly skimming over the Eastern counties, we find that the

[1] S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of the West*, 1899, II. pp. 39–40; R. C. Hope, *The Legendary Lore of the Holy Wells of England*, 1893, pp. 9–38.

[2] J. Sydenham, *Antient Colossal Figure at Cerne, Dorsetshire*, 1842, p. 9.

[3] *Jour. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1890, XX. pp. 9, 15.

[4] J. Stow, *Survey of London*, ed. H. Morley, 1890, pp. 46–7; Stow's authority is Fitzstephen. See also H. B. Woodward, *Geol. of the London District* (Mem. Geol. Surv.), 1909, p. 120.

Rev. G. S. Tyack, who has assiduously collected examples of holy wells, records an example from the West end of East Dereham graveyard, in Norfolk. In Yorkshire alone, Mr Tyack claims seventeen wells, though whether all of these are in the neighbourhood of churches, he does not say[1]. Lincolnshire contributes several instances; one only need be noted. Caistor church, in that county, previously mentioned (p. 12 *supra*) as standing within the confines of a Roman camp, was built near three or four springs. One of these, a "healing" spring, issued from the side of the churchyard. This example may be compared with that of Whitestaunton; in each case, there seems to have been a desire on the part of both Roman general and Christian architect to exploit the reputation previously gained by the waters. Here our enumeration must come to an end; for fuller details the reader may be referred to well-known works[2]. But if we forget that worship may be conducted under the open sky as well as under a roof of wood or stone, and if we overlook the fact that natural features, not less than stately fanes, were dedicated to patron saints, we shall miss much of the evidence which has fortunately been bequeathed to us.

Not connected with the subject of holy wells, but apparently forming isolated and local features peculiar to Wales, are the well-known oval or circular churchyards, enclosing churches which date from the Norman period. The churchyards are usually encompassed by a road, for which there is no obvious public requirement[3]. It has been conjectured that these roads

[1] G. S. Tyack, *loc. cit.*

[2] In addition to the works already cited, these are useful: Sir G. L. Gomme, *Ethnology in Folk-Lore*, 1880, ch. iv. and table on p. 105; also his *Folk-Lore as an Historical Science*, 1908, pp. 163–4, 323, 326; W. S. Walsh, *Curiosities of Popular Customs*, 1898, pp. 987–90; *Folk-Lore*, *passim*, especially Vols. III. and IV.; Sir J. Rhŷs, *Celtic Folk-Lore*, I. pp. 332–5, 354–400. May-day customs are treated at some length by J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 1890, I. pp. 72–86. R. C. Hope, *op. cit.*, gives extensive lists for the English counties. Some curious facts will be found in J. Aubrey's *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, 1686–7, pp. iii, 34, 58 etc. Sir Norman Lockyer, *Stonehenge*, 1906, ch. xxi.; T. S. Knowlson, *Origins of Pop. Superstitions and Customs*, 1910, pp. 193–205.

[3] Rev. E. Owen, in *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*, ed. W. Andrews, 1897, pp. 229–35.

represent ancient ramparts, which separate the churchyard from common ground, and this prosaic explanation may be the correct one. But one is obliged to notice another ray of light which comes from ancient custom. The Rev. E. Owen, who has described these churchyards, sees an analogy to the circle of stones in which religious ceremonies were performed by the Druids[1]—evidently he is referring to historic times. These circles, when prehistoric, are known to the archaeologist as "cromlechs"; the latter erections, from the fifth century onwards, were technically called "gorseddau" (*sing.* gorsedd). The Gorsedd consisted normally of a mound of earth and a circle of standing stones[2]. From denoting the place of assembly, and afterwards, "the Great Seat," the word came to mean the "Assembly of Bards," the chief member of which was throned on a "Chair," or stone, which occupied the centre of the circle. So early as the ninth century, there was a separation of functions; hence we read of the gorsedd of the bards and the legislative gorsedd[3]. My friend, the Rev. J. W. Hayes, who has collected much curious lore respecting the gorseddau of later centuries, notices that, though the legislative gorsedd has now no political or judicial powers, but merely controls the bardic order, it has a successor, for all worthy aims, in the national Eisteddfod. The Eisteddfod has social and educational functions only, the Gorsedd, on the contrary, was an institution for the framing of laws. Even in the year 1910, however, the Eisteddfod was preceded each day by the Gorsedd proper. This slight description will enable us, in the next chapter, to approach closely to another side of our problem, but, for the present, it must be taken as illustrative of the supposition made by Mr Owen. From the fact that, at one village, Efenechtyd, Denbighshire, a part of the encircling road really occupies the ancient bed of a stream, Mr Owen has further considered that the "roads" were originally intended to be moats, and that they contained water.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 230. Cf. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, 1880, pp. 98–103.

[2] W. Borlase, *Observations on the Antiquities of Cornwall*, 1769, p. 117; J. Toland, *Hist. of the Druids*, 1726, p. 108; *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 2nd Ser., 1850, I. p. 5.

[3] *Cambrian Journal*, 1856, II. p. 97; *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 2nd Ser., 1850, I. p. 11; Allcroft, *op. cit.* pp. 594–5.

This seems to be mere speculation; a more plausible explanation —though, again, perhaps not the real one—is that the hollows formed portions of an old stockaded village. Or again, we may have here small ring earthworks belonging to the pre-Christian period, though not necessarily of a defensive character. One cannot avoid recalling Stonehenge and Stennis; the round churches of Northampton, Essex, Cambridge, and London; the round towers of many other churches; the favourite "broken ring" of Bronze Age barrows and Bronze Age ornaments; and the earthwork rings and circular mazes of various periods. How much is ceremonial, and how much constructional, in matters primitive, is a nice question. It is worthy of notice that, in at least two instances, the churches under consideration have had double dedications. It has been mentioned that the circular churchyard seems to be essentially a Welsh feature. Two examples, those of Kerry and Llanfechain, are recorded from Montgomeryshire, and two from Carnarvon. Flint furnishes one instance, and Denbigh half a dozen[1]. England has hitherto supplied no records, but the feature may have been overlooked, and further observations would be valuable.

We have now completed what may have appeared, to the reader, a prolix and tedious inquiry. Impatiently, it may be, the query is uttered, What, in brief, is the conclusion of the whole matter? The reply may be framed by first presenting the opinion of a high authority, Professor Baldwin Brown, who asserts that there is no known instance where a Christian church has, in Britain, replaced a heathen fane[2]. We have seen that there are possible loopholes in such a general statement, and if we narrow its scope by using the word "site," instead of "church" or "fane," in each member of the sentence, the decision, with which Professor Brown would doubtless agree, is surely in the affirmative. To deny that many Christian churches stand on pagan sites is to blind oneself to facts. There is a folly of scepticism which is as blameworthy as that of credulity. With respect to the buildings themselves Professor Brown admits that such a substitution is "often signalized on the Continent[3]."

[1] E. Owen, *loc. cit.*; G. S. Tyack, *op. cit.* pp. 12–13.

[2] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 269. [3] *Ibid.*

Waiving the *a priori* argument that like conditions tend to beget like results, and that a series of events, in the main homotaxial, might be predicted for North Germany and England, for Sweden and Scotland, for Brittany and Wales, we may still choose to express the plea otherwise. For, as has been insisted, the conditions have not been exactly similar: Britain has suffered social disturbances to a greater degree than any of the countries named. It is therefore safer to say that, though there was, in Britain, as in other countries, no severe opposition between the old and the new faiths, there is difficulty in proving the case with respect to buildings, because of the loss of evidence.

As matters stand, the archaeologist is in the position of a diver, groping amid the timbers of a sunken ship for lost treasure, of whose presence he is certain, be his toll never so scanty. Or again, the archaeologist is like a scholar, closely poring over some blurred and defaced palimpsest, if haply he may decipher even a few of the original characters. "The drums and tramplings of three conquests," the fires of marauders, the mistaken zeal of church restorers, the husbandman's plough, the mason's hammer, and the sexton's spade, to say nothing of the gnawing tooth of Time, have so altered, if not obliterated, the records, that he must be content to read but a little, here and there, of the full story.

CHAPTER III

THE SECULAR USES OF THE CHURCH FABRIC

HAVING established the proposition that ancient churches were oftentimes erected near older pagan memorials, we are prepared to search for supplementary motives for the determination of sites. A very superficial survey makes it clear that no single explanation will apply to all cases. A few of the churches built within old entrenchments may, perhaps, as before noted (p. 17 *supra*), have been so placed in order to obtain additional protection. Respect for tradition, or defiance of superstition, was, however, in the majority of such cases, the uppermost consideration: the ground was not primarily chosen because of its secure position.

But besides the churches which accompany earthworks and megaliths, we possess a large number of churches which stand like sentinels on isolated hills, and these require separate study. Here again, no single theory will serve to account for the choice of site. The facts are familiar to those who have travelled through the more elevated parts of the country. But it is not alone on rugged hills that we find the Christian outposts; even on the gentle downlands the lonely church may be seen dominating the landscape. In the South-East of England, the hill parishes often have their churches mounted on the highest ground. Among the Surrey churches, that of Caterham stands 600 feet above sea-level; Chaldon and Coulsdon, 500 feet; Merstham, 400 feet[1]. Taking Sussex, we find Pyecombe church at an elevation of 400 feet; Falmer and Plumpton, 250 feet; and Street (Streat), 200 feet. Brook church, in the Isle of

[1] *Neolithic Man in N.E. Surrey*, pp. 108-9.

Wight, is built on a conspicuous natural hillock. Kent supplies us with excellent examples at Down, Cudham, and several other villages. These instances are sufficient—the list could be extensively enlarged, if necessary.

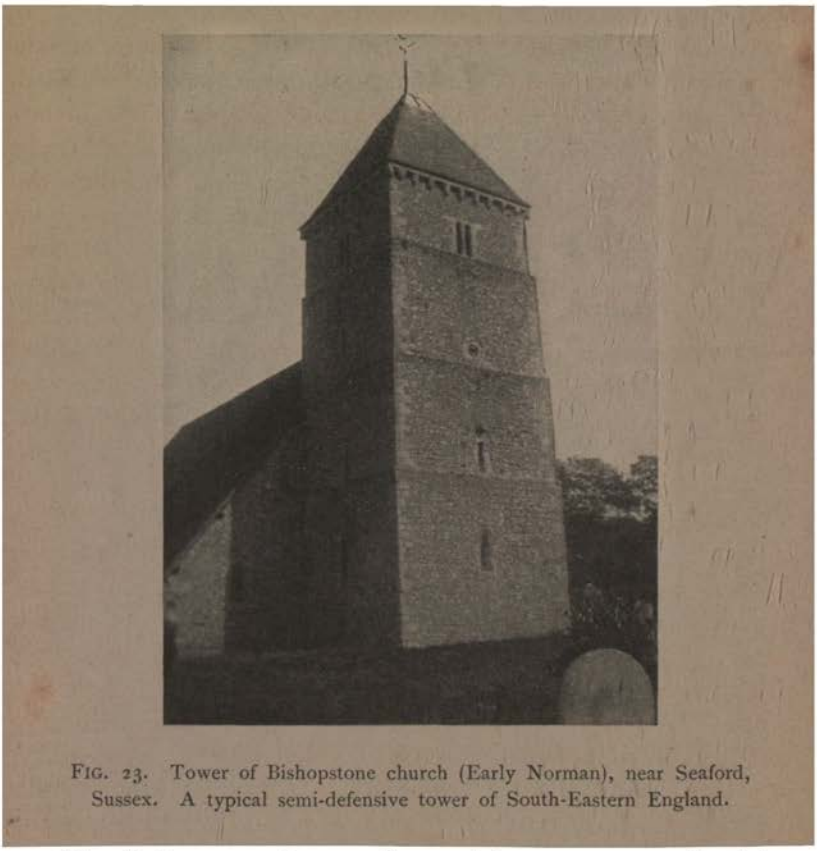

FIG. 23. Tower of Bishopstone church (Early Norman), near Seaford, Sussex. A typical semi-defensive tower of South-Eastern England.

The first comment on such a catalogue concerns the interpretation of the figures. Obviously, it is the height of the church relatively to the village or valley which is of importance, not the actual elevation above the sea. For example, although the Sussex village of Bishopstone lies in a chalk coombe, the church (Fig. 23) is built on a hillock which overlooks the dwellings of the inhabitants. Again, with respect to villages situated on the plain, the church frequently occupies the highest ground. Various causes may have been at work to influence the selection

of such spots. Here, there were difficulties with the feudal lord (p. 17 *supra*); there, the building was placed centrally so as to serve numerous outlying townships; yonder, the church stands prominently on the hill-top because a hamlet had arisen there before the church was thought of.

When all these deductions have been made, there remain very many churches unaccounted for. These have been raised, after prolonged labour and at great expense, on some inconvenient hill, up which the worshippers must struggle breathlessly Sunday by Sunday. Standing by one of these churches, the observer is mastered by the conviction that he is placed on an ancient vantage ground. Range of outlook, and effective strength of position, must have been the fundamental ideas in the minds of those who chose the site. Throw aside this conception, and all is contrariety. The modern architect, unaided by the student of folk-lore and folk-custom, is entirely at a loss when asked to explain such apparent folly on the part of the designers.

We have before noticed (p. 17 *supra*) how the annals of folk-lore are crowded with stories respecting these hill-top churches. The tales vary a little in detail, but the main theme is the same. Devils, or witches, or fairies, were in league against men, and so soon as the builders began their work, unseen hands removed the stones by night and laid them elsewhere, the church being finally set up only after a severe and lengthened contest. A variant of the superstition is met with in Scotland and Brittany, where churches are reported to have been reared in a single night by the fairies[1]. Just noting, as we pass, that the legends do not attempt to tell why men were so anxious to have their churches in lofty positions, let us glance at some of these bewitched buildings.

One of the examples best known to the writer is that of Churchdown, in Gloucestershire. The church stands on a Liassic hill of pyramidal outline, 500 feet above the sea-level. To climb the steep slope from the village below is an arduous task. The devil-theory still thrives vigorously in the neighbourhood, and the visitor will soon hear the account of the

[1] D. MacRitchie, *The Testimony of Tradition*, 1890, pp. 85–6, cf. pp. 70–1.

nightly removal of the stones by the spirit of evil. It chances that the local pronunciation of Churchdown is "Chōsen," and this has suggested to the otherwise serious countryfolk a weak pun. Not only, they say, was the spot deliberately "chosen," but the "chosen people" of the Prayer-Book response refers specifically to the favoured inhabitants of the village. The traveller cannot escape—

> "Full of their theme, they spurned all idle art,
> And the plain tale was trusted to the heart."

Breedon church, in Leicestershire, is on a hill which similarly overlooks the village clustered at the foot. For pedestrians, the ascent has been made easier by cutting steps in the pathway, but carriages have to take a circuitous route to reach the church[1]. Other churches concerning which a contest was waged between Christian masons and the powers of darkness are St Chad's, Rochdale, and Capel Garmon, in Denbighshire. In the second of these cases, the church was to have been erected on a hill, contiguous to an ancient spring, but the stones were repeatedly carried to a lower position[2]. This detail respecting the spring is not without significance, as was shown in the last chapter. Another illuminative Welsh example comes from Llanllechid, near Bangor. Here the fairies, or spirits, bore away the stones from a field called Caer Capel, and actually selected a situation—so the legend runs—more convenient than the first[3]. Both Caer Capel and Llanllechid are suggestive names, the latter gives a hint of a church built on the site of megaliths. At Wendover, in Buckinghamshire, the builders were thwarted by malevolent witches: at Hanchurch and Walsall, in Staffordshire, the trouble was caused by mischievous fairies. Each locality has its own bit of colour tinging the testimony, but to rehearse all the variations would be tedious. The number of these solitary hill-top churches was once probably much greater than at present. In some instances the buildings have been demolished; in others, modern dwellings

[1] *Lore and Legend of the English Church*, p. 20.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 21, 23. Cf. E. Clodd, *Tom Tit Tot*, 1898, pp. 47–9.

[3] *Lore and Legend*, &c. pp. 20, 23–4. Cf. A. Beckett, *The Spirit of the Downs*, 1909, pp. 261–2; *Folk-Lore*, 1909, xx. p. 315.

have sprung up around the church and have masked its isolated position. Indeed, this shifting of the population is a factor which must never be left out of sight.

How shall we explain the superstitions attached to these churches? One fact is manifest—the selection of site was, in the majority of cases, freely made, in the sense that other spots were available. On a broader interpretation, based on retrospect, we perceive that there was little choice, since there existed an ever-present necessity for an asylum in times of stress and danger, not to mention minor reasons. We have seen that the traditions do not assign a cause for the persistence, —nay, obstinacy, of the church-builders. Perhaps we should except those churches which were erected in particular spots as the result of the vision of some saint, or of warning cries and mysterious voices heard by the masons. On the whole, however, we can interpret the stories only by the aid of folk-lore and anthropology. Modern research has shown that, in the earlier stages of human life in Britain, the communities dwelt mainly on the downlands and elevated moorlands[1]. Only when the historical period was well advanced, namely, during the late Roman and Saxon occupations, were the thickly wooded valleys and marshy plains settled and cultivated. The evidence, though largely inferential, is both good and abundant, and need not be recapitulated here. All that is essential, for the moment, is to remember that descendants of the earlier races probably lived on, isolated in sparse communities, wherever the conditions were favourable. This is the legitimate conclusion to be drawn, for example, from the classical excavations made by Pitt-Rivers in the chalk downlands of Cranborne Chase. Anthropological tests afford similar support in other regions, such as the Yorkshire Wolds and the Derbyshire Moors. The remnants of the older British races, modified somewhat by intermarriage, doubtless held aloof on their bleak hills and tablelands with considerable stubbornness. The Teutonic farmers of the vales would not at first greatly interfere with the hill-top folk. A time came, however, when fresh-comers began seriously to re-invade the more elevated spots, and to

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 280–4, 343.

form settlements. This does not seem to have been done systematically until after the Norman period. But it is clear that any impinging of new races upon the older hill-top communities, however partial in its character, would give birth to exaggeration and myth. A fair corollary may be stated: the traditions which tell of the efforts of builders having been baulked or defeated by demons, witches, or evil spirits, are echoes of the time when older races still lingered sparingly on the hill-top settlements. On the other hand, the legends which speak of dreams and visions seem to represent a purely religious development belonging to the Christian period.

The erection of a church on soil hitherto relegated, by silent consent, to primitive tribal folk, or, failing these, to the wild beasts, was a novel and startling event. We need not assume that the primary purpose of the builders was to Christianize those remote peoples, though that may have been a subsidiary motive. It is more likely that the church was intended for the churchmen who built it. But to enter an area previously left intact would provoke keen opposition. Further, it is now a commonplace that our stories of witches and wizards, fairies and demons, are in part, at least, derived from folk of the Neolithic and Bronze periods, or from their near descendants. To the conquered people was imputed magical power, while to the victors, their weapons, and their appliances, the beaten folk paid the respect due to fear. Briefly, then, the superstitions which we are considering seem to speak of the projection of one race over territory long occupied by the survivors of much earlier races, and again, of the intrusion of social habits and religious customs among folk whose beliefs and modes of life were widely different from those of the invaders.

Still the question is unanswered, Why were hill-tops chosen as sites of churches? Primarily, of course, the churches were built for worship, but the answer to the question seems to be, that, in very many cases, the building was intended for temporary refuge and defence in those unsettled centuries which lasted down to the Wars of the Roses (cf. p. 57 *supra*, concerning earthworks). To establish this theory, we must consider a moderate number of instances extracted from a lengthy list.

And a clearer understanding will be promoted if our minds are chiefly fixed, for the present, upon church towers alone, because these are the portions of the buildings which best illustrate the theory.

As might be anticipated, the specimens of towers which furnish the most apposite illustrations are found in the Border Counties, and in the Welsh Marches, or, on the other hand, in those districts which have few natural defences. Beginning with Cumberland, we have the embattled tower of Great Salkeld church, guarded by a massive door, plated with iron, and fitted on the inside with stout iron bars. Under the aisle of the church are chambers, which are believed to have been used as dungeons[1]. The tower at Burgh-on-the-Sands, near Carlisle, seems to have served as a fortress or pele-tower[2]. (Etymologically *pele* or *peel* = the *stockaded* enclosure or fort.) Normally, the pele or "peel" towers were special structures, and were erected along the border irrespective of the position of churches, as at Corbridge, in Northumberland[3]. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that strong church towers were used as substitutes for peles in times of necessity. Thus, the twelfth century tower of Edlingham church, in Northumberland, is one of several that served this purpose; while Merrington church, with its tall steeple, crowning an eminence, actually stood a siege. The tower of Bedale church, near Richmond in Yorkshire, seems to have been constructed purposely for defence. The narrow staircase has, in fact, a portcullis groove, which was accidentally revealed after the steeple had been struck by lightning. The portcullis screened the tower from the body of the church[4]. Melsonby tower, also in Yorkshire, has been described as "a Norman keep in miniature[5]." The round steeple of the Early Decorated church of Roos, in Holderness, is supposed to have

[1] Murray, *Handbook to the Lakes*, 1889, p. 103. *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., XI. p. 60.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., X. p. 49. *Lore and Legend of the English Church*, p. 49.

[3] J. H. Parker, *Glossary of Architecture*, 1850, under *Pile-Tower*.

[4] S. O. Addy, *Evolution of the Eng. House*, 1898, p. 169. A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* p. 529 n.

[5] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 172.

been a post for watch-and-ward. It stands on high ground, and contains, near the top, a chamber which is reached by a spiral staircase of stone[1]. We know that the surrounding district was terribly ravaged by the Danes, and it is interesting to note that, in 1836, there was discovered, in a ditch at Roos, a rude model of a boat with a warrior crew. This curious object is considered to be of Scandinavian origin, and to date back to the invasion of the Danes and vikings[2]. If it be urged that the church fabric belongs to a period long subsequent to the raids of the Northmen, the comment is both fair and relevant. Two replies might be made: first, analogy indicates that churches of this kind most likely had predecessors on the same site, and secondly, defensive structures continued to be built long after the events which called them into existence passed away.

From Yorkshire we pass into North-East Lincolnshire. Here we meet with a remarkable series of Saxon towers, and here the Danish question recurs. Popular tradition, vigorous even "yn tyme of mynde," as Leland quaintly expresses it, declared that the present towers were built as refuges from the Danes. The idea was unhesitatingly accepted by the earlier school of antiquaries, and was supported by the older architects. We now know, as the result of comparative study of architectural styles, that the theory is barely tenable. The three best-known towers of the group under consideration are those of Waith, Scartho, and Holton-le-Clay, and they are all placed by Professor Baldwin Brown in his Saxon period C[3]. In other words they are believed to belong to the time of Edward the Confessor, when there was a revival of church-building[3]. As a further safeguard against ante-dating these churches, we may notice Mr Francis Bond's dictum that we have no Anglo-Saxon tower which is earlier than the end of the ninth century[4]. Of course, neither of these verdicts affects the question of the existence of previous towers on the present foundations. For instance,

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., XI. p. 160.

[2] T. Sheppard, *Hull Museum Publications*, No. 4, 1901, pp. 1–5.

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. pp. 339, 341, 342.

[4] F. Bond, *Gothic Architecture in England*, p. 590.

according to writers of the middle of the last century, and indeed, much later, the tower of Scartho church (Fig. 24) was said to rest on large blocks of stone which showed traces of fire, and

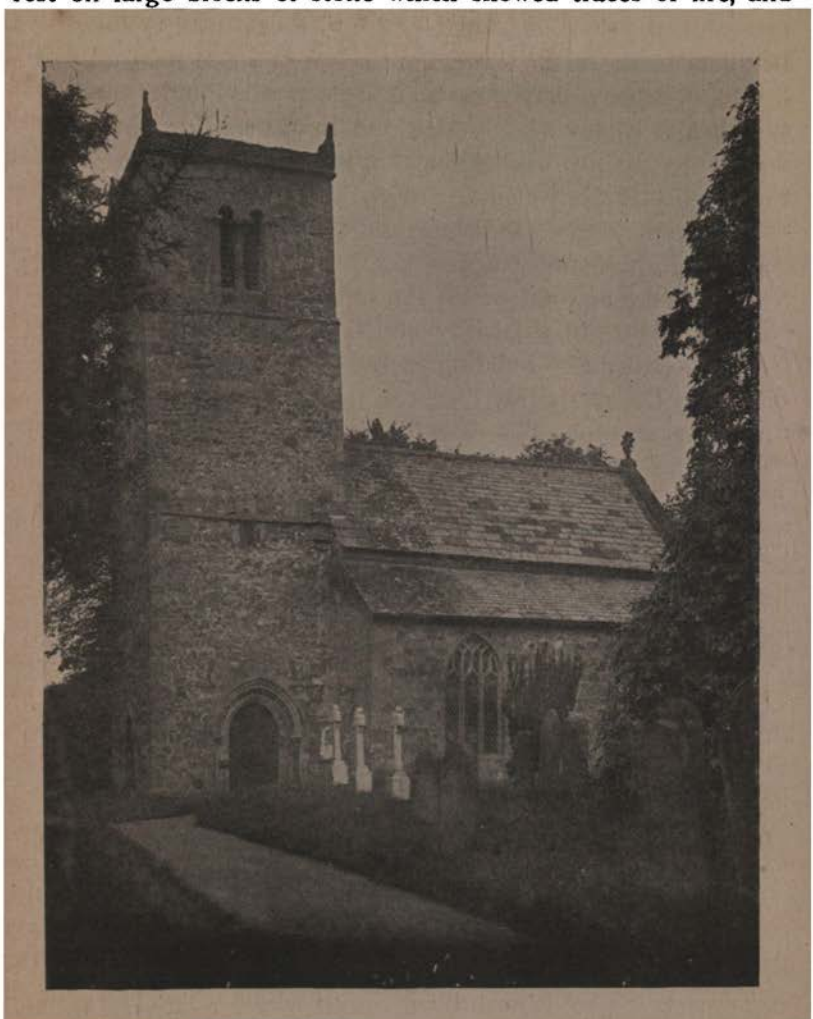

FIG. 24. Scartho church, Lincolnshire, from the South. The Saxon tower differs from the ordinary defensive type in having an original doorway at the base, seen at the West end. The doorway facing the spectator is a later insertion (Early English) and the parapet belongs to the Perpendicular period. There is a Saxon belfry window, divided by a mid-wall shaft. The walls separating the tower from the nave are three feet in thickness.

these blocks were thought to be relics of an older fabric which was burnt by the Danes. I have visited this church several times, and, while believing that the present tower may not be the original, I am not convinced that there are any fire-marked boulders to be seen. True, the masses of stone referred to by the topographers may now be quite concealed under the raised turf, but it is more likely that red lumps of ferruginous grit, which are plainly visible, have misled the antiquaries. The tower walls certainly contain a miscellany of geological specimens, —limestones, flints, sandstones, and rusty-coloured grits—and superficially the stains suggest scars caused by fire. One must, however, take account of all the circumstances that influenced church-building in a locality which, like that under consideration, is destitute of building stone. Some two or three miles distant is the church of Clee, the tower of which, except in the uppermost stage, bears a close likeness to that of Scartho. (The parapet, in each church, is a later addition.) The materials employed in Clee tower are mainly large beach pebbles, and ice-worn "cobbles," which had been washed out of the now-vanished cliff of Boulder Clay at Cleethorpes, and which must have been assiduously collected by the perplexed and needy masons.

Professor Brown declares that there is nothing about the Lincolnshire towers themselves to indicate a defensive character, though they are situated in a region which was exposed to Danish visitations. These eleventh century towers, however, he says, represent a style which was evolved at a somewhat earlier time, when the Danes were actually hostile. At most, he will admit only "a certain general likelihood" that these particular towers were used for defence[1], but he notes the general opinion that the occurrence of such towers in districts like Lincolnshire is "hardly fortuitous[2]." The palmary fact remains, that the Lincolnshire towers were, relatively to the exposed and unprotected tract of marshland on which they were built, real fortresses. There are no natural defences in the vicinity of the churches, and ordinary dwellings must have been

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 166–7, 305–6.
[2] *Ibid.*, II. p. 56.

of an insubstantial kind. Moreover, unless the idea of earlier buildings on the present sites be unreservedly abandoned, there still remains the great probability of continuity of general pattern. Long after the land ceased to be harried by pirates, the countryfolk would anticipate, and provide against, future onslaughts. It is no bar to this argument to oppose the fact that, as we later folk now know, those attacks were not made. We shall, indeed, find that defensive towers continued to be popular for several centuries after the Norman Conquest. We may say then, that the Lincolnshire type of Saxon tower was semi-defensive, though the existing specimens are of post-Danish age. Further than that we are not warranted in forming theories.

Leaving Lincolnshire, we notice a Bedfordshire example, that of Clapham. Here the church has a massive Saxon tower, which possesses an exterior door at a height of twenty feet from the ground. There is no window opening in the lower portion. It is not an insignificant fact that this tower overlooked a ford across the Ouse, which was approached by an ancient road[1]. The striking position of the door at Clapham has many parallels. The old tower of Swanage parish church, Dorset, had no door lower than the second story, and access was probably gained by ladders, which could be afterwards drawn up if required. At Norton, Derbyshire, the doorway of the tower, which is supposed to have been erected about A.D. 1300, is six feet from the ground, and was formerly reached by an external staircase of stone[2]. Occasionally, the external door was absent altogether. This was originally the case at Rugby church, the tower of which could be entered only through the nave[3]. This tower, which dates from the fourteenth century, is of square outline, and is devoid of buttresses. Its loftiness is conspicuous, for it reaches a height of 63 feet. The windows are narrow, and the lowest is twelve feet from the ground. Consider, again, the little church of Swindon, near Cheltenham, with which the writer was once

[1] Murray, *Handbook for Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Huntingdonshire*, 1895, p. 147.

[2] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 169.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., x. p. 473.

very familiar. The tower is of hexagonal shape, and the walls are thick and substantial. The only windows, a quarter of a century ago, were mere loopholes, splayed without and within, and placed near the top of the structure. A doorway on the North-East gave access to the tower; were this entrance blocked, one could only gain admittance by an exterior staircase on the West side.

The defensive tower, however, is perhaps seen at its best in South Wales. In the district of Gower, in Glamorganshire, twelve out of sixteen towers are believed to have been erected

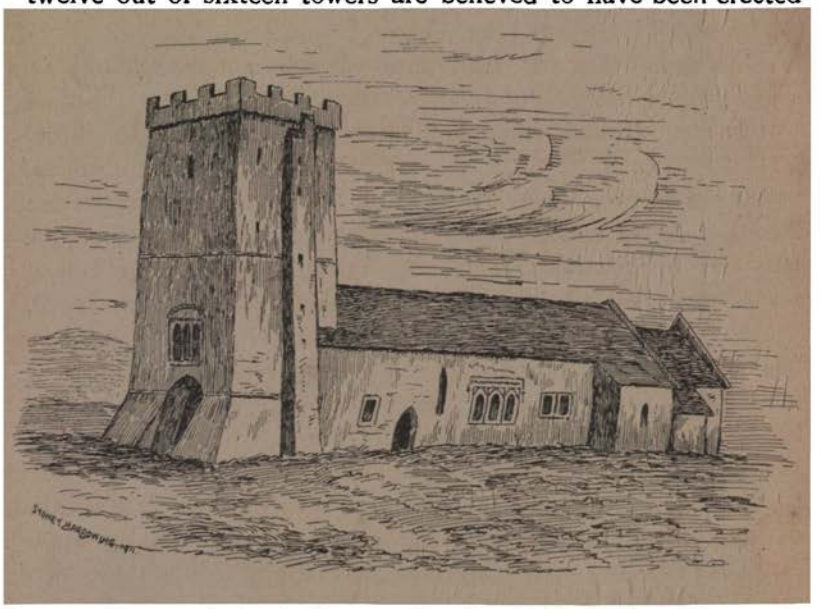

FIG. 25. Oystermouth church, Glamorganshire, from the South-West. The tower is less lofty than is usual with the churches of Gower, but it has several "defensive" features. It batters from the base, and has the characteristic battlement. There are no buttresses, but a flat staircase-turret will be noticed. Except the debased West window, the openings are all of very insignificant size.

as much for defence as for beauty; each is a stronghold as well as a campanile[1]. Generally these towers have no buttresses, and frequently, as at Oystermouth (Fig. 25), they "batter," or slope a little from the base upwards. This battering is also met

[1] E. A. Freeman, in *Archaeol. Cambr.*, 1850, N. S. I. p. 44. G. T. Clark, *Mediaeval Milit. Archit.*, pp. 114, 117.

with in the castles of South Wales. Again, the towers have an overhanging embattled parapet, supported on corbels. Where exterior doors are now found, they are usually later insertions. The original doors, where they exist, resemble those of keeps in being situated some height from the ground. The tower, too, opens into the nave as often by a mere doorway as by a belfry arch. Instead of belfry windows, there are insignificant slits, and the rest of the wall is quite blank, and destitute of architectural or decorative features. In short, as Freeman expressed it, the essential military character of the towers is stamped on every stone[1].

The churches of South Pembrokeshire are not less remarkable. The study of these buildings is rendered more attractive because the area in which they are found corresponds roughly with the territory occupied by the non-Welsh folk of "Little England beyond Wales." This fact may indicate a period of severe struggles between the English and Norman intruders and the earlier settlers, but not necessarily; since the Gower churches, at least, would have to be explained somewhat differently. The raids of the Norsemen upon the Pembrokeshire coast seem to have come to an end with the eleventh century; hence dread of inland foes seems to have caused the erection of these strong towers. Professor Freeman, who carefully investigated the Pembrokeshire towers, and who wrote a painstaking account of their architectural details, observed, "Every tower is a fortress, designed to hold out as long as Zaragoza or Sebastopol[2]." Anyone who has examined these churches, will, after making some deduction for the literary form of expression, be prepared to endorse this opinion. Take, for instance, the church of Gumfreston, near Tenby (Fig. 26), already known to the reader through its medicinal spring (p. 95 *supra*). This sequestered church is built on the inner slopes of that high ridge which, on the North, overhangs the lovely vale of St Florence. Almost enclosed by trees, with whose foliage the ivy-wreathed tower quietly harmonizes, the tall fabric is approached unwittingly, so that, when the visitor reaches the gate of the churchyard, the

[1] E. A. Freeman, *loc. cit.*, pp. 45–6.

[2] Quoted by A. L. Leach, *Guide to Tenby*, 1898, p. 69.

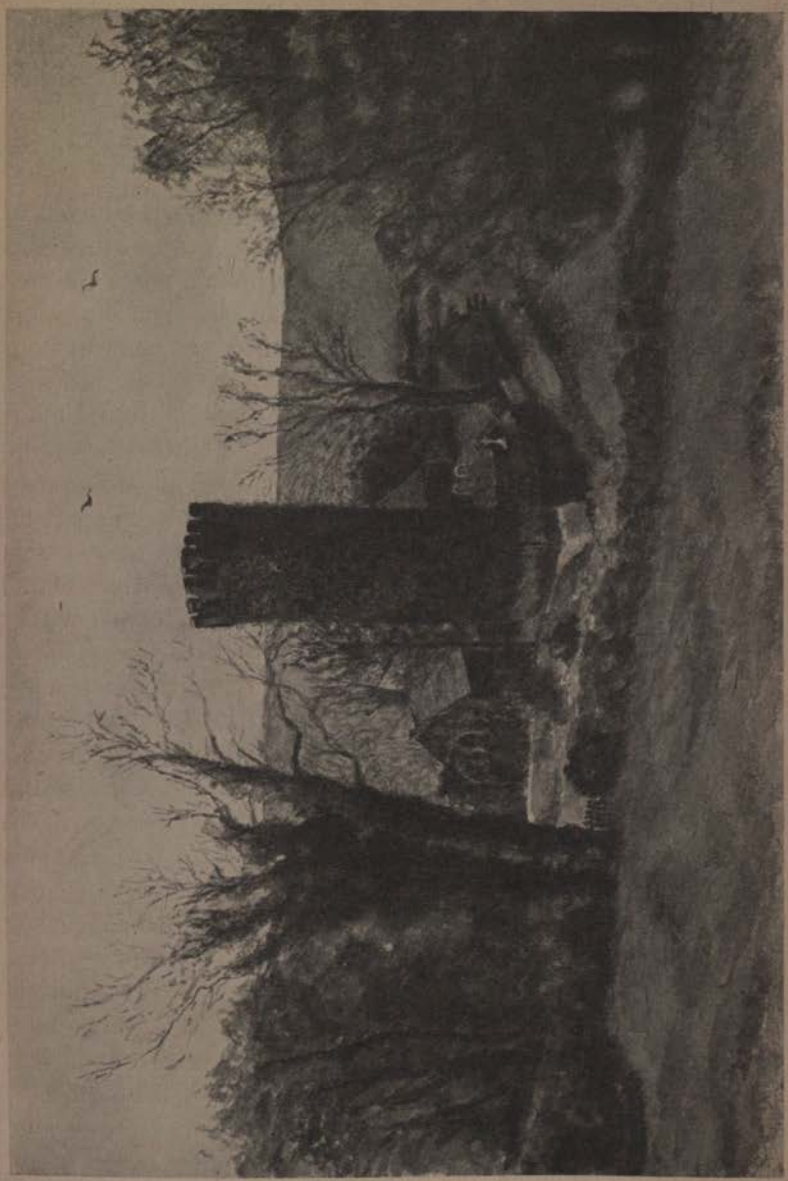

FIG. 26. Gumfreston church, near Tenby, Pembrokeshire; a building with a defensive tower.

picture calls forth a sudden exclamation of pleasure. A second and more critical glance reveals the chief features of the tower. Its height, 65 feet, is especially noticeable. Like other towers which we have met, it tapers a little, and it is crowned with a battlement. Each of its five stories was evidently devoted to a particular use. Freeman has noted them: a ringers' chamber below, followed by stories which had windows looking towards the North and East, then a room fitted up as a dovecot, and lastly the belfry itself[1]. The date of the Gumfreston tower is fixed approximately at A.D. 1300. Of the Pembrokeshire series as a whole, Freeman says that they were all built within "castle times," and that they belong to "all manner of centuries from the first to the last Harry[2]." He further considers that he could discern preparations for habitation in "some of the vaulted apartments." The simple character of the Pembroke towers formerly led many writers to assign them to a pre-Norman period, but this opinion is now discredited. On the other hand, the evidence shows that they are not, as a class, late Tudor buildings, as extremists in the contrary direction have suggested.

A subtle objection is made that the towers may be simply imitations of castellated architecture, and that the resemblance, being incidental and unintentional, has no recondite significance. There is some degree of force in the contention, because there must have been interaction of influence. Thus, not only in semi-secular buildings, like the abbot's barn of Bradford-on-Avon (Figs. 43, 44, pp. 171, 173 *infra*), but also in castles and fortified mansions, like that of Nunney (Fig. 27), do we meet with architectural features which are usually associated with religious structures. Such details, as a rule, are best seen in doors and windows, and they are in harmony with the Gothic styles of their respective periods. Side by side with these ornamental features, primitive arrangements for defence are retained, even in the Tudor country mansions. In spite of this cross-influence it may be observed that the defensive steeples occur just in those places where defence

[1] Quoted by A. L. Leach, *loc. cit.* A good description of the church, from an artist's point of view, is given by S. C. and A. M. Hall, in *Tenby*, 1860, pp. 86–93.

[2] *Archaeol. Cambr.*, N. S. II. p. 168. Cf. p. 172.

would be required. Often, as at Gumfreston, the church was the only building strong enough to give adequate security to human beings and to portable property. Castles do not exist everywhere, neither, indeed, do these sturdy towers; but the one group seems to be largely complementary to the other. Exception has also been taken to the evidential value of the narrow

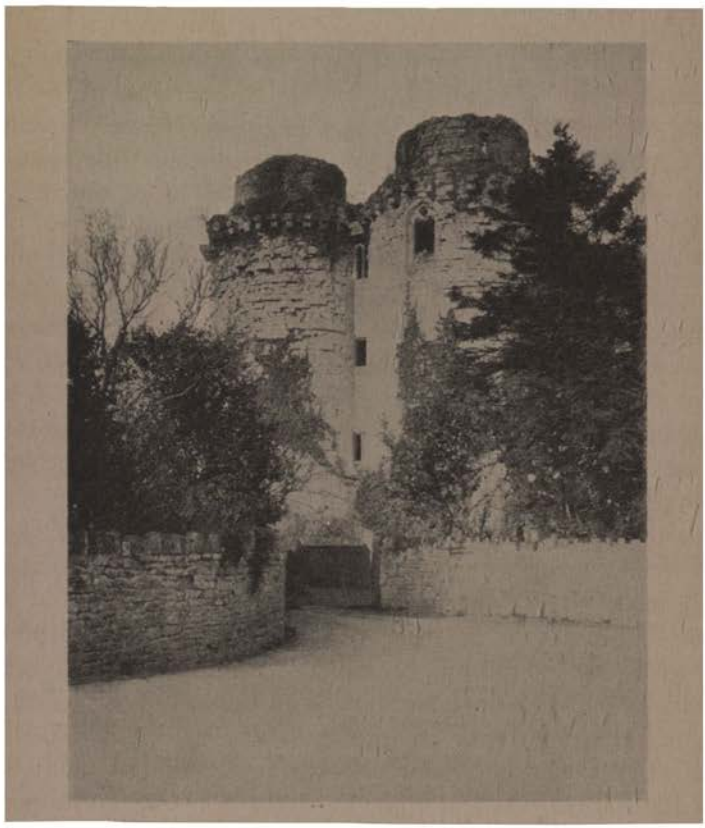

FIG. 27. Portion of Nunney Castle, Somerset, a fortified manor-house, built A.D. 1373—1400. The corner towers probably served as peles. In the windows (Decorated style) and in other details, there is evidence of the relationship between religious and secular architecture.

window openings. Mr Allcroft, while expressing agreement with the theory that ecclesiastical towers were frequently employed for protection, deprecates an appeal to these narrow slits

as affording satisfactory testimony[1]. He contends that the openings were made strait and were provided with an inner splay to minimize draughts. That they would be moderately efficient for this purpose may be conceded. Not only the ordinary current of air, but the high gale, had to be foreseen and provided against. Glazing the apertures was out of the question, in the early times when glass was a costly article, especially in remote counties. But there is another mode of approaching the question. What was the purpose of the well-known "oillets" in buildings purely defensive? Even in primitive warfare no tower was impregnable if it presented wide openings to the foe. Arrows and slingstones would, under certain conditions, prove more swift and deadly agents than fire itself. We may grant that the round-headed twin aperture, with its single plain baluster-shaft in the middle, so familiar in the late Saxon towers of England, was not avowedly of a defensive character. That admission does not exclude a belief in the defensive value of the narrow window. During the Perpendicular period a tiny battlemented parapet was frequently used for the ornamentation of a capital or transom, but such a practice does not negative the original use of the battlement in fortification. Further it might be reasonably argued that the strait window-opening was copied from secular strongholds because it originally served one purpose in all cases. The point is not of prime importance, but it is worthy of note that the narrow loophole continued to prevail after glass had come into general use for church windows, and after bells had become common. The price of glass was, therefore, not the deterrent. Again, the bell-ringer would perhaps have actually welcomed a wider opening. Whatever may have been the motive, we find that, from the Early English period onward, the tiers of spire lights known as dormer windows or lucarnes, though mainly decorative in character, continued to be made very narrow. On the other hand, these dormers were so arranged that one series was placed, with respect to the group above or below, on alternate sides of the spire. One fact remains; in towers which were designed to withstand attack,

[1] A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England*, p. 529 n.

the retention, if not the initiation, of the narrow type of opening, suggests motives of strategy.

Before quitting the English towers it is well to note that the strength of many of them was tested during the Civil War. In Devonshire alone, a number of instances can be brought forward. The Parliamentary troopers turned the towers of Powderham and Ottery St Mary into temporary fortresses, while the Royalists annexed those of Tiverton, St Budeaux, and Townstall[1]. In Wiltshire and Yorkshire, again, several churches were used as shelter for men and horses. Thorold Rogers asserts that the Royalists garrisoned the parish church of a Hampshire town, the name of which, however, he does not give, and, thus protected, withstood a siege and cannonade[2]. The reader will doubtless recall many instances in which tradition tells of church walls battered by shot and shell. Making due allowance for exaggeration, it must be admitted that folk-memory has a sound basis in fact, and some, at least, of the damaged buildings may be genuine illustrations of the effects of assault by artillery.

It is all but impossible to bid farewell to defensive steeples without some reference to the famous round towers of Ireland. The disinclination to ignore the subject is increased by the knowledge that these structures afford collateral proof of the defence theory. For the best instructed modern opinion pronounces them to be fortresses as well as belfries. These towers, which have been the cause of an abiding controversy, are typically tall and slender, and are surmounted by conical caps. Their height ranges roughly from about 60 to 125 feet. The number of examples still remaining is given as 76, and they are found exclusively in association with some early church, or with some ecclesiastical settlement. The usual position is near the North-West door of the church[3]. This fact alone indicates their connection with early Christianity. A typical round tower, somewhat restored, is that of Devenish, situated on an islet of the same name in Lower Lough Erne, county Fermanagh (Fig. 28). In

[1] G. S. Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 50.

[2] J. E. Thorold Rogers, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, 1889, p. 66.

[3] Eleanor Hull, *Early Christian Ireland*, 1905, p. 206.

the vicinity is the ruined priory of St Moiaise, as well as several other ecclesiastical remains.

A gradual advance can be traced in the architectural style of the round towers. The stages of their development were parallel to, and probably contemporaneous with, those of the churches and oratories[1]. Three periods of building have been distinguished. It is not until the beginning of the tenth century, says Miss

FIG. 28. Round tower of Devenish, on Devenish Isle, Lower Lough Erne, near Enniskillen. Height, 84 feet; doorway, 9 feet from the ground; walls, 4 feet thick. The windows approximately face the Cardinal Points. A string course will be seen around the base of the conical cap.

Eleanor Hull, that we find the towers mentioned, and none can be dated earlier with certainty. They are later in date than the churches built by St Columba at Raphoe, Kells, and elsewhere, and they belong essentially to the period when the Northmen made their attacks on Ireland. Nevertheless, they continued to be built until the middle of the thirteenth century[2]. All these

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

facts are of vast interest when we recollect those Lincolnshire churches which, folk-memory tells us, once served as refuges from the Danes.

Normally, the round tower contained three stories, and, like many of the English towers before described, had the outside door placed high up in the wall, so that it was accessible only by means of a ladder. Similarly, the oratory of Kells has three small chambers, or attics, between its round barrel vault and the outer pointed roof of stone; these chambers could be reached only by the aid of a long ladder, and entered through a hole in the inside roof. Viewed in comparison with the other buildings of the period, the oratory represents a lofty structure. It has a highly pitched roof, and receives no light save what is afforded by two small windows. This building is assigned by Miss M. Stokes to the year A.D. 807[1].

In passing, we note that the round tower was probably developed from the beehive hut, and became specialized for a definite purpose, which we shall discuss in a moment or two. The beehive house, in its turn, was most likely evolved from the wattled dwellings of the ruder aborigines of Ireland. Professor A. C. Haddon cited authorities to show that the round towers structurally betray their pagan design, by their retention of string-courses which serve no useful object. The towers, he considers, are, in reality, derived from primitive wicker huts, circular in plan, and of a somewhat tall type[2].

We now inquire what purpose the towers were intended to serve. The answer, though given with a fair degree of decisiveness to-day, has been long in coming, and there still exists a minority of writers who dissent from the orthodox view, and who favour other theories, some of which are of the fantastic kind.

The earliest name given to the round tower, so far as is yet recorded, is *cloictech*, or belfry (A.D. 948). Naturally, therefore, one is led to associate the towers with bells; yet, seeing that only small hand-bells are believed to have been in existence at that date, a large tower of masonry would not be needed for

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 108–9, 200.

[2] A. C. Haddon, *Evolution in Art*, 1895, p. 90.

their reception. Nor, again, would these small bells have been well heard, when rung from the top of the tower, even by folk standing at the base[1]. The insignificant windows of the earlier towers are, for some unknown reason, usually near the floor. The later structures, it is true, have windows near the top, facing different points of the compass. These examples may have been used as belfries proper. Speaking generally, the towers were, nevertheless, not belfries. Even could it be proved that, co-eval with the towers, there existed a knowledge of bell-casting, that would not settle the question, because there are no structural signs that bells were ever hung, or rung, within the buildings. We may conclude, then, that the towers were, in part, depositories for bells, though not themselves actually bell-towers.

Dismissing a number of unsupported speculations, one by one, we are finally shut in to the conclusion that the towers were originally defensive. They were refuges for men, and storehouses for valuable property. This is the verdict delivered by those who, like Miss M. Stokes and Miss E. Hull, know the round towers best[2]. Mr G. T. Clark, in his early study of the subject, thought that the towers were principally intended to receive bells, and that their uses for refuge and storage were later adaptations. In after years, he changed his opinion, and declared that what he had formerly deemed the secondary purpose, was in reality the sole one[3]. A more recent authority, Mr Francis Bond, has compared the round tower with the Italian campanile, of which he considered it to be a local variety. But he draws this great distinction: the Italian structure was built to receive bells, and may afterwards have served for defence; with the builders of the Irish towers, refuge was the primary idea, though, at a subsequent period, bells were hung in the fortress. There remains an authority whose voice must be heard with great respect. Mr J. Romilly Allen, while agreeing that the bells of the early Celtic church were portable,

[1] E. Hull, *op. cit.* pp. 208, 213–4. Cf. p. 247.

[2] E. Hull, *op. cit.*, *passim*, and esp. Chap. XX. M. Stokes, *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, 1878, Chaps. V. and VI., and pp. 137–141. S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* pp. 173–5.

[3] G. T. Clark, Letters reprinted in *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, pp. 137 et seqq.

and that they were rung by hand, contends that the towers were erected to accommodate bells of a heavier kind. Nevertheless, he admits that the Viking invasion gave an impetus to the building of the towers[1]. This divergence from the modern view is noteworthy, though if Mr Allen's statement were restricted to the later buildings, the theories would harmonize fairly well.

When the Northmen swooped down upon a district, priests and people would hasten to the nearest tower. Thither the fugitives carried their most precious possessions: manuscripts, relics, sacred vessels, and vestments. Some objects of this kind may have been housed in the tower permanently. Once gathered within their asylum, the inhabitants were comparatively secure. They could hurl stones and other projectiles from the narrow loopholes, while they themselves were safe from danger, at least, until relief arrived. On the other hand, missiles thrown by the besiegers, either from the hand or a catapult, would rarely hit the defenders inside. A successful battery could not be made in a few minutes, and even firing the stone tower was not a speedy mode of overpowering the refugees.

After the Danish incursions came to an end, the towers would still serve as spy-places against native enemies, as "strong-rooms" for protection against thieves, and, probably, as we have seen, as bell-towers for raising alarms. The pattern of the tower, moreover, would long survive its original necessity. Summing up, we may say that the round towers were defensive buildings, the use of which was mainly secular, but to some extent ecclesiastical also. Perhaps we ought rather to say that the religious and the secular uses were so blended that no demarcation could be made.

The round towers suggest to us parallel usages in England. The first similarity is that of the detached church tower, which is not a rare feature in our Gothic architecture. Selecting a few examples from a numerous list, we notice the isolated tower of Walton, Norfolk; Berkeley, Gloucestershire; Evesham, Worcestershire; and Ledbury, Herefordshire. The last-named county

[1] J. Romilly Allen, *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1905, pp. 195–6. For detached towers, see *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., IX. pp. 169–70, 277; X. pp. 18, 356 and references there given.

supplies several instances, a fact not without interest, in view of the geographical position. Bosbury tower, Hereford, is situated 60 yards from the South side of the church; while that of Pembridge, which stands on an eminence, is 25 yards distant from the main body of the building. As with the hill-top churches, the peasantry generally have a tradition to explain the anomaly. Thus, at Warmsworth, Yorkshire, two sisters, charitable, but obstinate, are said to have made a bequest for the building of a church. Each lady had chosen a site for the church; neither would give way. The fabric was in consequence built in detached portions. The bells call the folk to church in one direction, the congregation walks away to service in another. Obviously, the ordinary folk-tales, as told nowadays, do not fully explain the facts. In several cases, as at Wickes and Wrabness, in Essex, and at Brookland in Romney Marsh, it is evident, from the size and construction of the tower, that it was built, not for hanging bells, but for defence and refuge. The English detached towers, it will be remarked, are usually square, not circular. The round detached tower of Bramfield, in Suffolk, is an exception, and there may be others.

The circular towers of East Anglia (Fig. 29) are only partially analogous to those of Ireland. They belong to various styles from the Norman period onwards, but they are, as just mentioned, attached, not free. Again, while the Irish towers are round because of their development from primitive structures of that shape, the English towers had their form determined by the nature of the building materials available, flint and coarse rubble. Yet there are points of resemblance also. The towers of Norfolk and Suffolk are usually devoid of ornament or individuality. The windows, too, are commonly found in the upper stories, and they face the Cardinal Points[1]. Many of the towers overlook the North Sea, and they were doubtless used for posts of observation, if not as receptacles for treasure. The custom of building defensive towers, whether square or round, in connection with the church, was, as before indicated, probably a legacy from Danish times. But danger did not cease with the piratical raids of the sea-kings. No one who has not lived on the sea-coast, especially

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 173.

on the East or South coast of England, can rightly appreciate the fears which beset maritime folk with respect to invasion. We see the alarm translated into action at the time of the Armada, during the Dutch Wars, and at the period of the Napoleonic struggle, when the martello towers were built, nay, we witness its influence in our own day.

FIG. 29. Rushmere church, Suffolk, with Early English round tower. The upper portion has been rebuilt.

Of the three attached round towers still existing in the county of Sussex, that of Piddinghoe (Fig. 30) deserves notice. The immediate explanation of the form adopted by the builders is that the necessity of having stone quoins was thus obviated. But if this be the sole reason, why are not such towers more common in Sussex? Consider the facts. The church at Piddinghoe stands on a natural platform, at a slight, but effective, elevation above the adjacent river Ouse. The tower, built c. A.D. 1120, has the narrow, round-headed windows of the period. One of these, facing West, is six feet from the ground. There is no external doorway. At the time the church was erected there seems to have been no other

defensive building. One may fairly suppose that the tower was used as a refuge against pirates and invaders, who would have only a few miles to sail from the mouth of the Ouse in order to reach the village. Another Sussex tower, a square structure in this instance, that of East Dean (Fig. 31), probably served as a partial defence of the rising ground above Birling Gap.

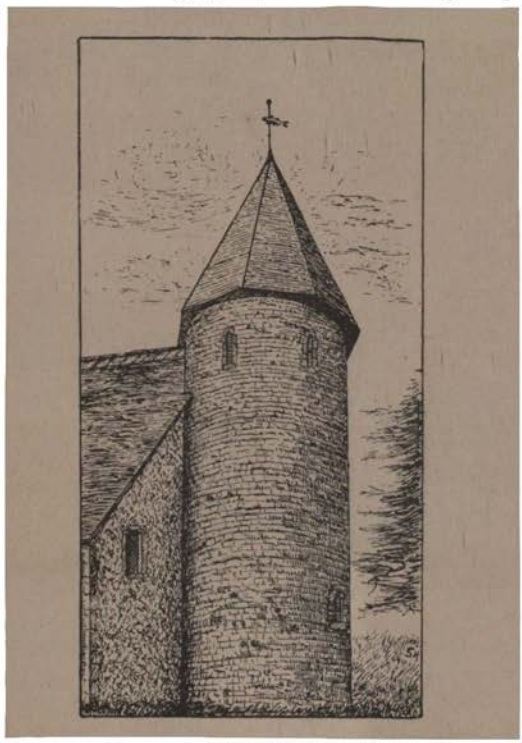

FIG. 30. Norman tower (c. 1120) of Piddinghoe church, Sussex, seen from the North-West corner of the churchyard. The tower is built of squared flint, and the short spire is timbered.

In tracing the parallel which has been proposed, let us not lose sight of the fact that the church of Mediaeval England was, as such writers as Canon Jessopp have fully demonstrated, almost incredibly rich in priceless relics and portable treasure. Chalices and basins and thuribles; jewelled crosses, and candlesticks wrought out of precious metals; lanterns and bells; vestments and girdles, brooches and buckles, these and many

other valuables, needed to be protected from theft. Large and important churches, which possessed hoards of treasure, not uncommonly had a watchman who spent the night in the sacred building. Sometimes he was provided with a special chamber which was situated over the porch, sacristy or vestry[1]. The Cathedral church of St Albans, for instance, had a celebrated watching-loft which was erected about the year A.D. 1400[2]. At Lincoln it was considered sufficient for watchmen to patrol the Minster after nightfall. It may be added that down to the

FIG. 31. East Dean church, Sussex, from the North-West. The walls of the tower, possibly pre-Norman, are very massive, about three feet in thickness. An apsidal structure, the foundations of which are still traceable, was attached to the Eastern face of the tower.

sixteenth century, in such German cities as Ulm and Frankfort-on-the-Main, watchmen lived in rooms constructed in the church steeples. On the approach of strangers, or in times of alarm, the watchman rang a bell, blew a horn, or fired a musket.

Another detail which is germane to the question of resemblances and contrasts, is concerned with the word "belfry." We have seen that, from the earliest time of which we have documentary evidence, the Irish towers were called by a name which

[1] A. Jessopp, *Before the Great Pillage*, 1901, pp. 59–60. See also S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 172. *Eccles. Curiosities*, ed. W. Andrews, 1899, pp. 153–60.

[2] F. Bond, *English Cathedrals*, 1899, p. 217.

is equivalent to "belfry," but that, notwithstanding, the structures were not originally bell-towers. The English term "belfry," now, indeed, denotes a building for hanging bells, yet, contrary to popular belief, the word has no etymological connection with the word "bell." Sir James Murray and Professor Skeat have collected irrefragable testimony proving that the Middle English *berfrey*, and the Old French *berfrei*, in all their various spellings, denoted a wooden tower, or pent-house, generally movable, employed in besieging and defending fortresses. In due time the word came to signify a watch- or beacon-tower, then an alarm tower, and, finally, a bell-tower. The English form *belfray*, which seems to have misled the earlier philologists, did not appear before the fifteenth century[1]. Hence we have this curious case of opposites: the Irish towers, at an early date, possess a name which erroneously implies that they were merely bell-houses, while the English steeples contained bells long before the bell-chamber got the designation "belfry," a word which became spuriously connected with "bell."

This review of the Irish towers and their possible analogues in England must not further detain us, for we must hasten to consider another secular use of the tower. Many English steeples were set up largely to serve as beacons and landmarks, and, in fact, this purpose was doubtless kept in mind even when the primary intention was defensive. Sometimes, the entire building, rather than the steeple alone, was a landmark. Whitby Abbey church, as is well known, is reached by ascending 199 steps from the old town lying below in the valley of the Esk. The church is believed, with good reason, to owe its prominent position to a desire, on the part of its founders, to provide a lighthouse for storm-tossed mariners. Much the same may be said of the parish church (St Mary's) which stands on the cliffs hard by. Again, comparing the small with the great, and choosing, for the sake of emphasis, a towerless structure, let us take the tiny square chapel of St Aldhelm (Fig. 32), which is perched on the summit of St Alban's Head, in Dorsetshire. This quaint chapel, with its vaulted roof, and its interesting Norman doorway, has unfortunately been greatly restored. The buttresses shown in

[1] *New Oxford Dict.*, and Skeat's *Etymol. Dict.* under *Belfry*.

the illustration are modern additions; they are not seen in old engravings of the chapel. The building looks down on the waves, 440 feet below, but, so fierce are the storms now and then, that the chapel is drenched with spray and bombarded with small pebbles. Within, says tradition, chantry priests were wont to offer prayers for the sailors in the Channel, while a beacon light was burnt on the roof. And, truly, no other explanation sufficiently accounts for the presence of the chapel in such a

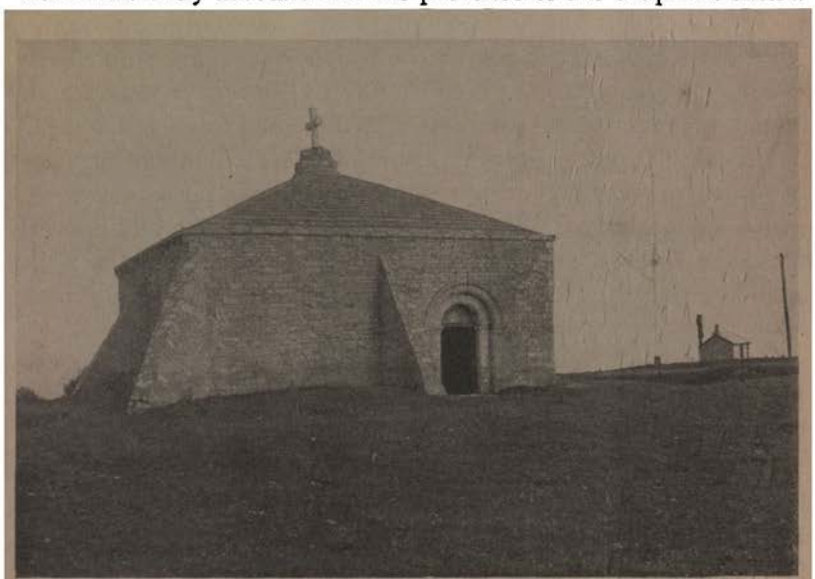

FIG. 32. St Aldhelm's chapel, St Alban's Head, Dorset; a beacon for sailors.

remote position[1]. Perhaps a similar reason will apply to the conspicuously placed church of Cheriton, near Folkestone (Fig. 33).

A curious legend is told of St Botolph's church, at Northfleet, in Kent. The tower, originally set up, it seems, to guide ships coming up the Thames estuary, proved too serviceable, for pirates found it an excellent beacon. It was therefore thought fit, so the story runs, to make the tower look like a fortress, and it was accordingly rebuilt by the villagers[2]. We notice that

[1] St Catherine's Chapel, Abbotsbury Hill, Dorset, is even a better example of the beacon-chantry (Perpendicular).

[2] Murray, *Handbook for Kent and Sussex*, 1863, p. 17.

there are steps leading from the churchyard to the first floor, so that one is inclined to believe a portion of the story, at least. Whether, however, this was a feature of the original design is uncertain.

FIG. 33. Cheriton church, Kent; an isolated hill-top church, of Norman or pre-Norman foundation, built on the edge of a steep hill overlooking the English Channel. The site was probably chosen so that the church would serve as a landmark for mariners and wayfarers.

On Brent Tor, Devon, at a height of 1130 feet, there stands a little church which overlooks the very edge of a precipice. The diminutive graveyard contains a few mouldering tombstones. The building, which was probably first set up during the Early English period, is, like so many others found on eminences, dedicated to St Michael, the tutelary saint of churches so placed. (Cf. St Michael's Mount, Cornwall, with its former chapel and shrine (Fig. 34); Mont St Michel in Normandy, with its Benedictine Abbey; Mont St Michel at Carnac, with its chapel, calvary, prehistoric tumulus, and pagan legends.) The church was evidently intended as much for a landmark as for a house of prayer. To explain its exalted position, local tradition relates

that a grateful merchant had a struggle with the Evil One concerning the site, and that mastery remained with the trader. To ask why the merchant desired to build in such an unfavourable situation is to supply at once the missing link of the chain.

One may recall how, in the days when roads were execrably muddy, and pathways across the boggy moorlands were intricate

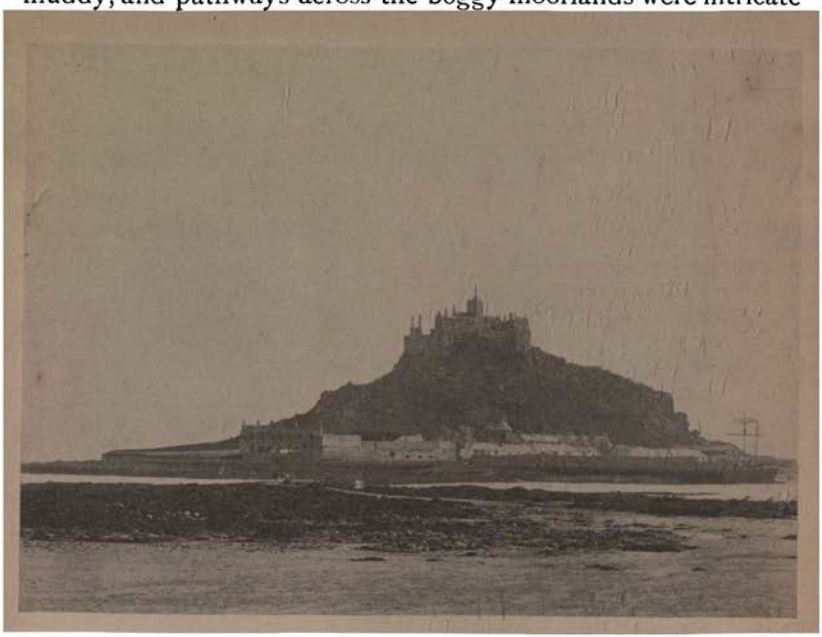

FIG. 34. St Michael's Mount, Cornwall. The present building on the top of the mount is almost entirely modern, little of the original Priory church of St Michael being traceable. In this church was the shrine of the saint.

"Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold."

Lycidas.

and difficult to follow, it was customary to erect pillars, towers, and other guide-marks at suitable spots. For instance, Dunston pillar, in Lincolnshire, was reared (A.D. 1751) as a lighthouse to assist travellers in crossing the desolate, thief-ridden expanse of Lincoln Heath. The practice of building such towers continued until the nineteenth century, as is amply proved by the famous monuments and towers of the Isle of Wight and Somersetshire.

Often the first intention has been lost, and the buildings are considered as mere prospect towers. It must not, however, be inferred that the beacon towers were never used for this last purpose, though the need of protection, and not pleasure, gave the impulse. A conspicuous church tower would serve the same object as a toot-hill. At Royston, near Barnsley, may be seen, below the belfry, on the West side of the tower, an oriel window, supported by a long corbel. The recess thus formed was locally called the "lantern" or "look-out," and tradition says that a light was formerly burnt within it[1]. The case of the tower of St Nicholas, Newcastle, is especially instructive. It was furnished with a "lantern," and was valued as an inland lighthouse by wayfarers over the moors. But the remarkable fact about the tower is that, from time immemorial, it has been repaired by the Corporation of the city. Legal opinion, to this very day, upholds the view of the liability of the Corporation[2].

St Michael's church, poised on the summit of an outlier of Inferior Oolite at Glastonbury Tor (cf. p. 16 *supra*), in Somersetshire, was doubtless, like so many other churches of that county, a day-mark for travellers. This section may conclude with a notice of a building which is usually considered solely as a "pilgrims' church," but which, I feel convinced, at one time served also as an important beacon. The church referred to is that of St Martha, Chilworth, near Guildford (Fig. 35). It stands on the top of a Greensand hill (720 feet), and is, for many miles around, an outstanding object, whether viewed from the distant heights or from the pleasant valleys below. Common belief ascribes the foundation to the Mediaeval folk who traversed the Pilgrims' Way to Becket's shrine at Canterbury. There can be no question that pilgrims of those days would welcome such a church, both as a landmark and as a temporary resting-place. The name of the church, St Martha's-on-the-Hill, is believed to be a perversion of "Martyr's Church," the martyr being St Thomas of Canterbury. But the structure, though rebuilt and modernized, has a foundation which dates somewhat earlier than the year of Becket's death. For this reason, and because of contributory local tradition of a massacre of Christians, a high authority on

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 170.

[2] *Antiquary*, 1896, XXXII. p. 350.

church dedications urges that the name should be "Martyrs' Church," and that the spot is consecrated, not to one person, but to early Christians who suffered there[1]. It should be noted, in passing, that St Martha's is technically called a chapel, but that it is really a church, as described above. It possesses all the customary parochial rights, and is used for the usual functions. Legally, the building is what is termed a "donative," and is independent of episcopal jurisdiction[2].

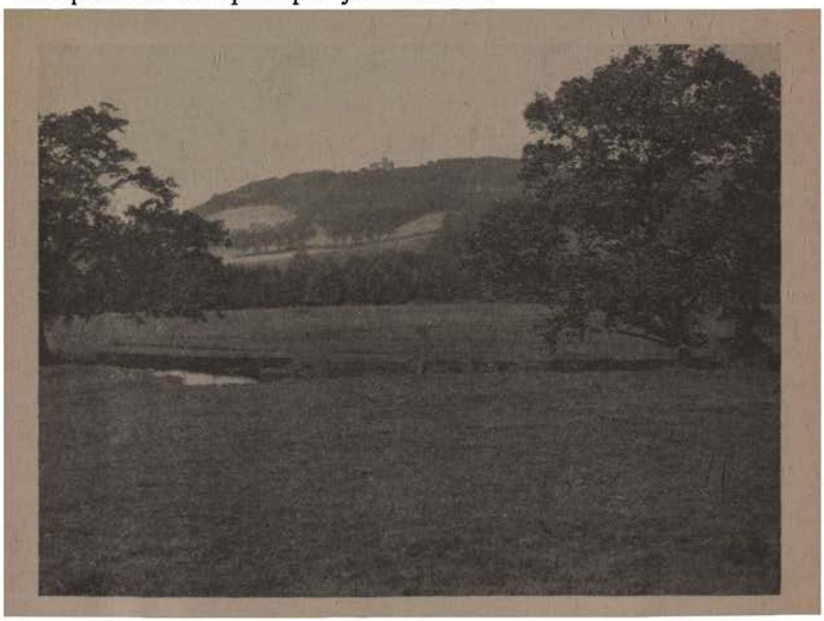

FIG. 35. St Martha's chapel, near Guildford, Surrey. The present cruciform building is a restoration (1848) of the supposed "Pilgrims' Church," which had fallen into a ruinous condition. The view is taken from the South, a little to the East of Chilworth station. The Tillingbourne stream is seen in the foreground.

Leaving the tower, we come next to the nave of the church, and approach an attractive study—one that has exercised the minds of many observers. Why should the size of the nave be often so utterly disproportionate to the congregation which it has to accommodate? Has the population changed inversely to such

[1] F. Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications*, 1899, II. p. 510.

[2] *Ibid.* II. p. 510 n. Cf. *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.* XV. pp. 158–9; XVI. p. 248. J. C. Cox, *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, p. 213.

an extent since the church was built? One might rashly deem the riddle solved by a reference to acts enforcing conformity in religion, or to the half-truth that "all persons went to church in those days." On rare occasions, perchance, the inhabitants did all go to church, at least those who were neither infantile nor bed-ridden. But these explanations are idle. Churches may be found, which, even if we allow that every adult in the village was a regular churchgoer, could never at any time have been quite filled at a purely religious service.

Various answers have been given to the troublesome query. At Thaxted, in Essex, in whose church, as the natives say, all the parishioners might comfortably be put to bed, the excess of accommodation is thought to be explainable on the assumption that the builders provided for a growing population. The general facts, however, are strongly against this notion. William Cobbett, who will be admitted as a careful observer, though his conclusions were frequently hasty, exemplified both his strength and his weakness in discussing this subject. Over and over again, in his *Rural Rides*, and his *History of the Protestant Reformation*, he calls attention to churches, which, in his day, would hold three or four times the total number of the inhabitants in the respective parishes. From these facts, he deduces that the land in Mediaeval times supported a greater number of folk, and that the villages were larger and much more densely populated. Other writers, favoured with greater opportunities than were available to Cobbett, have, nevertheless, been betrayed into the same error. But the population theory is now so generally discredited, that it is unnecessary to rebut it directly by an appeal to the estimated populations of the country during each successive century. Besides, an estimated census of the population during the Edwardian period, for instance, can never be more than approximate, and may itself cause more controversy than the theory which it is warranted to disprove.

The seemingly obvious answer to the puzzle of spacious churches is, as so often happens, incorrect. The best refutation, perhaps, is afforded by general principles, and by certain ascertained facts. These principles and facts are bound up with what has been briefly called "the social theory of Mediaeval Chris-

tianity." What this theory implies will shortly appear. From a slightly different point of view, the inordinate size of the nave directs us to a period when secular and sacred departments of parish life were more closely blended than they are to-day. Before developing this idea, however, we must pause, else we shall find another hypothesis barring our way.

This latest hypothesis, and one which will command greatest attention because of the high reputation of its advocates, might best be termed "the devotional theory." It may thus be stated: a large Mediaeval church was not necessarily built for a large congregation, but it was, first of all, a monument, freely raised, as a permanent expression of duty and devotion to the Divine Father. Mr Francis Bond, who propounds this theory, is dealing primarily with Westminster Abbey, but, from the context, it seems clear that he supports a wider application. Here is an Abbey church, a huge building, over 500 feet in length, and 100 feet in height; yet it was erected, as documentary evidence proves, for a congregation which was normally under sixty[1]. "It seems hardly conceivable," remarks Mr Bond, "that it could have been planned and built for pigmy man who walks beneath; it seems not built for mortal man by mortal men; man is overpowered by his own work[2]." No, this vastness had another purpose besides that of the accommodation of worshippers—it was man's tribute to the Unseen, his attempt to symbolize the Eternal and the Infinite. For, indeed, at the Great Sacrament, "the priest of the church officiated, congregation or no congregation," and in the village church all the choir that could be got together, as a rule, consisted of the parish priest and the parish clerk[3]. A congregation of two: yet, as Thorold Rogers observes, "it is certain that villages with fewer than fifty or a hundred inhabitants possessed edifices which would hold a congregation of five, or even ten times that number[4]."

Does the "devotional theory" furnish a full explanation of the difficulty? As befits one who has learned many valuable

[1] F. Bond, *Westminster Abbey*, 1909, p. 33.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 28. Cf. Mandell Creighton, *Hist. Essays and Reviews*, ed. L. Creighton, 1903, p. 276.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 30.

[4] J. E. Thorold Rogers, *op. cit.* p. 66.

lessons when a student under Mr Bond, and who has almost unqualified admiration for his teaching, I criticize the theory with some misgiving. Yet, though Mr Bond's solution is probably correct, in the main, with respect to our cathedrals, minsters, and abbey churches, it seems quite unsatisfactory for hundreds of parish churches. All thoughtful students must, indeed, admit that the aesthetic and devotional aspect of church architecture—its grandeur, its freedom, its wealth of what was choicest in design and ornament, its sculpture, painting, stained glass, and mosaic work—cannot be eliminated when considering the question of size. These details are parts of a whole. Again, the daily service, constantly observed until the Reformation, and, as recent investigation has shown, probably never wholly discarded since that event[1], was a duty undertaken, we may readily admit, irrespective of the number of worshippers. The building was as magnificent and costly as wealth or self-denial could make it. The resplendent vestments, the solemn liturgy, and the beautiful music were the best that the age could produce. So, too, the very vastness of the structure was a token that the founders performed their work in no niggardly spirit of economy or time-saving:

> "They dreamed not of a perishable home,
> Who thus could build."

It must be understood that, with respect to the populace, this description is largely theoretical. In practice, such lofty sentiments would be confined to picked leaders and their devoted adherents. Even with these churchmen, ideals were often degraded, and always unattainable. Of the people in general, it may be said that beneath a veneer of religion there existed an amorphous mass of heathenism. The monks and parish clergy of remote districts were not merely the pioneers of religion, but they represented the outposts of civilization amid a population of semi-barbarians. But, in architecture, it was the leaders who counted.

In spite of all these considerations, the argument from devotion appears to be insufficient to meet the case, unless—an improbable event—the secular uses of the nave, which are

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XII. pp. 167, 269, 412.

about to be described, were the results of afterthought. Rightly to understand the problem, we must constantly recollect two staple facts: first, that the early churchmen were ever ready to adopt a compromise, and, secondly, that, especially during the Mediaeval period, there existed a close relationship between the secular and the religious aspects of social life. So many pieces of evidence have to be colligated to explain the working of these two principles, that it is difficult to make a beginning. But, since the question of compromise has already been dealt with in Chapter I., we may chiefly confine ourselves to the second point. On the whole, a start may best be made by reviewing the meetings, other than those strictly concerned with worship, which were held of old time in churches. Some of these meetings must have comprised far more able-bodied men than were ever collected together for a strictly religious celebration. In fact, a particular church may have had to shelter not only the inhabitants of the parish, but also the dwellers in several outlying parishes and hamlets. What business was it that gathered these folk together?

When discussing pagan sites, we found that open-air courts, whether territorial, or composed of members of a free community, commonly met near some prominent landmark, natural or artificial (p. 34 *supra*). Of these objects, megalithic monuments—particularly menhirs and stone-circles—were much favoured. The stone-circles, as we saw, were in later days gradually abandoned, and the members of the community assembled in the churches. We should reasonably expect to discover evidence of overlapping of custom, and this is what we actually find. For, at a date when gatherings on mounds and within cromlechs are still sporadically recorded, we find frequent references to courts held in churches. Thus, during the Saxon period, trial by ordeal, which was deemed a religious transaction, was conducted by the priests in the parish church[1]. So early as A.D. 973, says Sir G. L. Gomme, a *gemōt* was held in St Paul's, London, while in A.D. 1293 a court met in Norham church, Northumberland[2]. The County Court, a very ancient body, presided over by the sheriff, was held

[1] F. A. Inderwick, *The King's Peace*, 1895, p. 20.

[2] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, 1880, p. 59.

in the Sheriff's Court, or the Manor Court, but, if these were not convenient, the members assembled in the open air, or in the church[1]. The Welsh laws of the ninth and tenth centuries frequently refer to churches as courts of justice[2]. Relics, it was declared, were unnecessary at trials held in churches, for the church was the place of relics.

What is true of the Saxon and Norman times holds good for a somewhat later period. At Ashburton, Devonshire, the annual courts of the manorial lord met in the chapel of St Laurence, when such officials as the bailiff and the port-reeve were elected[3]. The court leet, which, under the feudal system, was charged with maintenance of the peace, and which had jurisdiction over petty offences, frequently, as at Bolton, assembled in church[4]. The Courts of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports also met in a consecrated building[5]. Sometimes the business to be transacted was of a trivial kind. At Alvingham, Lincolnshire, "the Commune of the servants of the Ladye Nicholas," or their "baylifes," are bidden to meet in the adjacent church of St Leonard, Cockerington, to appoint a day for mowing grass in their common pasture[6]. But whether the matters to be considered were light or weighty, the church seemed to be the natural building for such gatherings. Hence, when Mr A. C. Benson, in one of his delightful essays, speaks of the "great cruciform structures" of the Fens, "built with no idea of prudent proportion to the needs of the places they serve," he does not take a comprehensive view of local requirements.

The course of events just sketched might have been anticipated. Meetings in the open-air having been discontinued, where were the folk to meet in council? There was a poverty of suitable buildings. Long ago Fergusson remarked on "the almost entire absence of municipal buildings during the whole of the Middle

[1] F. A. Inderwick, *op. cit.* p. 12. The various courts are briefly described on pp. 12–17. See also P. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, 1892, pp. 354–96.

[2] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 181.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XII. p. 32.

[4] S. and B. Webb, *English Local Government*, Book I.: *The Manor and the Borough*, 1908, I. p. 113 n.

[5] S. and B. Webb, *op. cit.* I. p. 375.

[6] T. Longley, before the Louth Antiq. and Nat. Hist. Soc., April 21, 1908.

Ages[1]." The short list of notable examples which he was able to bring forward served to make the general absence more striking. A few guild halls and town halls make up the catalogue for the cities; the smaller towns have little to show of this kind. There is consequently a basis for the belief, expressed by some writers[2], that the use of churches as courts of justice was "universal in feudal England." The assertion is doubtless too general, but, if for the word "universal," we read "widespread," it would be quite correct. The case of St Nicholas, Newcastle—a church to which allusion has already been made (p. 131 *supra*)—supplies a noteworthy example of this usage. For centuries the burgesses met in that church for public business. In the tower hung a bell, known as the "common bell," which was tolled on these occasions. Three times a year it also summoned the freemen to their guild meetings, when a sermon was preached by the Lord Mayor. This bell had another name, "the thief and reever bell" (*reever* = freebooter, cattle-robber); tradition says that it announced the holding of fairs, and gave warning to drovers and dealers that no inconvenient questions would be asked concerning the beasts which they had for sale[3].

In view of the foregoing facts, surprise need not be provoked by the statement that consistorial courts were commonly held in places of worship. If it be urged that much of the business of these courts pertained strictly to religion, it may be answered that a still greater proportion was distinctly secular[4]. At Ripon, for example, where the collegiate church was the place of assembly, the ecclesiastical courts took cognizance of cases of perjury, theft, defamation of character, debt, affiliation, and so forth. A similar court sat in the "galilee" (porch, vestibule, or ante-chapel) of Durham cathedral[5]. The most famous of our consistories, the Court of Arches, derived its name from the characteristic architecture of the church of St Mary-le-Bow,

[1] J. Fergusson, *Hist. of Architecture*, 3rd edition, 1873, II. p. 413.

[2] J. C. Jeaffreson, *A Book about the Clergy*, 2nd edition, 1870, I. p. 339.

[3] *Antiquary*, 1896, XXXII. p. 350.

[4] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. pp. 339–40. See especially, for an account of the Worcester Consistory Court, *Reliquary*, 1892, N. S. VI. pp. 230–234.

[5] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 182.

London, where it was originally held[1]. The trials of Lollards and other heretics were usually held in cathedrals or important churches[2], but these instances must not detain us, since they belong chiefly to the religious field of action. Yet it is really a hard task to decide where the line of cleavage runs. The bishop in his cathedral, and the abbot in his abbey-town, were, as Mr J. C. Jeaffreson has observed, in many respects comparable to the lay baron or the wealthy manorial lord. Administering large estates, these dignitaries often had an army of tenants, from whom fealty was exacted. The business transactions connected with the property must have been somewhat numerous, and, from their very nature, they were constantly recurring. It may call forth wonder nowadays to specify some of the curious possessions once held by the Church. The Gate House, the chief prison in Westminster, belonged to the Dean and Chapter, and the town gaol of Salisbury to the bishop of that city[3]. Of the stocks and whipping post we shall have to speak later. Enough has been said to prove that secular courts, as well as justices' sessions, formerly met in churches. The practice, it may be added, continued, to some extent, long after the Reformation. The persistence of some of the legal vestiges is indeed really amazing. Not only, as Mr Addy informs us, was the ancient order of serjeants-at-law wont to meet in the nave of old St Paul's, to meet clients in consultation, but each serjeant actually had a pillar allotted to him. This rendezvous was known as Paul's Walk. Down to a late period, certain executors met annually in St Mary's church at Bury St Edmunds, for the auditing of their accounts.

But custom was never uniform with respect to these assemblies within sacred buildings. Contemporaneously with the use, in some parishes, of the church fabric for meetings, we find other villages where the churchyard was the rallying-place. Several causes may have conduced to these results. The church may have been too small; there may have been a quarrel with some strict incumbent; more frequently, there was a dispute about the

[1] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. p. 340. [2] *Ibid.* I. p. 342.
[3] W. J. Loftie, *In and Out of London*, N. D., pp. 101–2.

interpretation of a prohibitory canon. Indeed, records show that the practice was always being condemned, and always being continued. Thus, during the reign of Henry II., the old portmoot of the burgesses of Oxford met in St Martin's churchyard[1]. Meetings in church were forbidden at the Synods of Exeter and Winchester (A.D. 1287)[2]. Yet, in A.D. 1472, the inhabitants of two Yorkshire parishes were reported to the Archbishop of York for holding councils in the churchyard. ("*Dicunt quod omnes parochiani tenent plebisitum, et alias ordinaciones temporales, in ecclesia et cimiterio*[3].") Nevertheless, in the sixteenth century, we find that one of Laud's unpopular acts was his attempt to stop the practice of holding lay tribunals in consecrated places. At Tewkesbury, in particular, the townsfolk deemed this a grievance. Armed with a licence from the bishop, and shielded by ancient custom, the justices of the peace had long held their sessions in the churchyard. For these acts, the primate called some of the justices into the High Commission Court. When challenged, Laud was obliged to confess that temporal courts might be held on consecrated ground or within the church upon urgent occasion, yet there was no warrant for sessions which might involve a "trial for blood[4]." Sir G. L. Gomme, who has collected many instances of the custom which we are discussing, cites authority to show that, in recent times, the stewards and bailiffs of a leet would occasionally, in bad weather, disregard the canon and hold their courts in churches[5].

As the practice of holding manorial courts in the church fell into abeyance, or died out altogether, certain vestiges were left behind as tell-tales of the past. The principal survival of this kind was the announcement from the pulpit of forthcoming meetings of secular courts. In A.D. 1656, the notice convening the Court Baron of Hathersage, Derbyshire, was published in the village church[6]. But there are later instances of the transaction of business within the sacred walls. Several cases are given by Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb, whose untiring researches

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 177.
[2] F. A. Inderwick, *op. cit.* p. 13.
[3] *Fabric Rolls of York Minster* (Surtees Soc. XXXV. 1859), p. 256.
[4] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. p. 341.
[5] *Prim. Folk-Moots*, pp. 53, 59, 115.
[6] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 181.

deal with the period which has elapsed since the Revolution (1689–1835)[1]. Thus, the villagers of Puxton, Somerset, down to the year 1816, were summoned to church by "sound of bell," in the early morning, to perform business connected with Dolmoors Common. Of this land, we are told, 23 parts were assigned by drawing lots, the remaining, or twenty-fourth part, known as the "Outdrift" or "Outlet," being let by auction, by "inch of candle." The rent of this plot was employed to defray the incidental expenses of the twelvemonth. This ancient custom was terminated, in the year mentioned, by an award under the Enclosure Act which was passed in 1811[2]. Records of this character could doubtless be easily paralleled by those students who have access to parish documents. For, speaking generally, at the close of the seventeenth century, the inhabitants at large had, both by common law and immemorial local custom, the right to be summoned, by tolling of the bell, to transact specific business in the vestry of the church. This claim held good not only for the Easter "vestry," but for such other "town meetings" as might be judged necessary. Manifestly, these "open" vestries could not always be accommodated in the small side-rooms with which we are familiar—the nave must have been utilized. Within the sacred building, officers were elected, church rates made, and miscellaneous matters, such as those connected with commons, pasturage, and the parish pound, were settled[3]. The old name of these assemblies, by the way, seems to have been "town meeting," yet the name "vestry" goes back to A.D. 1564, at least. The summoning bell bore the significant name of mote-bell, and it was rung for half an hour[4].

It has been affirmed, by H. R. von Gneist, that the open parish vestry was almost unique in England, since, besides the House of Commons, it was the only popular assembly which had the right to impose compulsory taxation. Yet, according to Mr and Mrs Webb, the legal framework was slight, and the proceedings were "supported with some dubiety[5]." Again, it

[1] S. and B. Webb, *op. cit.* I. p. 113, cf. pp. 13, 34. [2] *Ibid.* I. p. 131.

[3] S. and B. Webb, *Eng. Local Govt*, Book I.: *The Parish and the County*, 1906, pp. 37–40.

[4] *The Parish and the County*, I. pp. 37, 38 n. [5] *Ibid.* I. pp. 37, 39.

was argued by Professor Maitland and Bishop Hobhouse that the vestry is not traceable before the fourteenth century—the name itself, as we have seen, is apparently later—that it belonged to the parish, not the township, that it was "a purely ecclesiastical entity," and that churchwardens are officials of comparatively modern institution. In short, the authorities mentioned considered that the germ of the vestry was ecclesiastical, though its civil power may have sprung from the decay of the manorial courts[1]. It is further considered that it was only during the reign of Henry VIII. that churchwardens were entrusted with civil functions, such as providing arms or harness for soldiers[2] (cf. p. 157 *infra*). In later times, even within living memory, we have had the so-called "close" vestries. Usually, a close vestry consisted of the clergyman, the squire, three or four farmers, the miller, the innkeeper, and a freeholder or two. Mr and Mrs Webb pertinently remark that, if one's imagination is greatly swayed by the idea of the close vestry, it will be difficult to picture the assemblies which met in past ages. We must conceive an assembly composed of numerous and diverse constituents, and endowed with various powers. Here, then, we get a ray of light on the theory of social convenience as affecting the church fabric.

We may remind ourselves, as we go along, that vestries are still held in our English parishes, and that they meet in the room attached to the church fabric. But their powers are now confined to ecclesiastical matters. Other business, such as the control of parish property, and the management of civil charities, was, by the Local Government Act of 1894, transferred to the Parish Councils. And this mention of the stripping away of secular powers leads us to ask, Were the original vestries, which Professor Maitland deemed purely ecclesiastical, so entirely restricted to church matters as at the present day? Probably not, because, as we have seen, the secular and the ecclesiastical were, in some measure, inextricably united. Even supposing, then, that the open vestry did not rise from the ruins of the old village-moot, it must have partially dealt with secular affairs.

[1] F. W. Maitland, in *Law Quarterly Review*, 1893, IX. p. 227.

[2] *The Parish and the County*, I. pp. 43 et seqq.

The simple fact, however, which affects the present discussion is that the old parish meetings were, like the modern vestry, held within the walls of the church.

Another derivative from the era of church assemblies is the custom of electing mayors within the sacred building. Formerly, the mayors of Sandwich, Boston, Northampton, Grantham, and other towns were chosen in the parish church[1]. Sometimes, not only was the election conducted in church, but the function was performed around a particular tomb. This was the case with the mayor of New Romney and the bailiff of Lydd, in Kent[2]. At Brightlingsea, Essex, the place of election was the belfry.

Still another survival, eloquent even in its insignificance, is the practice of posting secular notices on church doors. When one sees, affixed to the door, bills referring to such subjects as regimental orders or government commissions, and when one watches the villager scanning the list of parliamentary voters, it is easy to dismiss the matter by saying, "Oh! the notices are posted there because the place is public and known to all; besides, the Church is established by law." Doubtless, such ideas are often present in the mind of the overseer or parish clerk when he pins the bill on the door, but inquiring folk want to know more. If the query be closely pressed, the response may be that the door of the porch is not considered a part of the fabric. For this explanation there is an appearance of reason, but, after all, the reply is inadequate. The fact that the baptismal service, and a portion of the marriage service, were often performed in the church porch, shows that the structure was recognized as a part of the hallowed building. It is true that, in France, one may observe "affiches" posted inside the cathedral, because the porch is deemed a part of the exterior, and notices which are placed in the latter position must be stamped, and the duty paid. How the idea has arisen it would be difficult to say with certainty. But there is one feature which the French and English buildings have in common. The porch was pre-eminently the spot for discussing parish business, because it formed a convenient shelter and halting place for the worshippers. It was a focus

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., XII. p. 148.

[2] *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XIII. pp. 141–2.

of attraction to gossips and traders alike. The real reason, then, behind the tradition, is, not so much that the porch was a kind of no-man's land—a neutral territory—but that it was a most appropriate rallying point for the transaction of business. To this subject we shall return in the next chapter.

The retention of the Royal Arms in churches has been supposed by Mr Addy and other writers to be a secular survival. Mr Addy suggests, inferentially, that the practice is a relic of the "basilica-temple" period[1]. But, in the first place, the symbol does not seem traceable to the old civil or ecclesiastical courts. It is true that the Royal Arms may be seen on stained glass, and, occasionally, on priestly vestments of the pre-Reformation period. Again, in Spanish churches, the Arms are displayed at the present time, sometimes even over the altars. Further, although the symbol began to be exhibited in special tablets or frames almost immediately after the death of Henry VIII., it was not until the Restoration that the suspension of the Royal Arms was made compulsory[2]. While it is clear, therefore, that the symbol has no necessary connection with Protestant reformations, it seems to be straining the facts too far when one tries to carry the practice back to the early centuries of the English Church. It is essential, too, to remember that Royal Arms, as we understand them, did not exist in the pre-Conquest period. There remain, however, more authentic relics of the union of secular and ecclesiastical affairs which must be reserved for the present, since it is high time to consider another aspect of the question. To do this properly, we shall require a separate chapter.

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 183.

[2] J. C. Cox and A. Harvey, *Eng. Church Furniture*, 1907, pp. 350, 353. *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., II. pp. 428–9, 513–4.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECULAR USES OF THE CHURCH FABRIC (*continued*)

FOR the practice of holding judicial and civil courts in churches there is, as we have seen, a sufficient explanation in the necessities of the time, and in the simple outlook which our forefathers took concerning human affairs. But the further problem arises: at what stage in the early history of the Church must we look for the germ of this custom? It has been shown that the open-air court lingered on after secular assemblies had begun to flock into the church. Yet, in the broader sense, it seems clear that civil business, to a greater or lesser extent, had been transacted in the church ever since churches were founded. All analogy points in this direction, but where is the actual evidence to be found? Some have sought it in the word "church" itself. We must therefore turn our thoughts to philology for a few moments. We shall find ourselves engrossed in an alluring, but, at the same time, a tantalizing study. Unfortunately, we cannot yet reach a final decision, and we shall have to be careful to set aside such conjectures as betray perverse ingenuity. Philological testimony is very helpful where its voice is certain; where indistinct, it may lead us far astray.

The word "church," and its variant "kirk," present us, in fact, with an unsolved problem. Let us attempt to summarize what is known on the subject, and so prepare the way for a startling hypothesis. First, then, both *church* and *kirk* were once believed by lexicographers to be purely Saxon words, but recent research has disproved this theory. After the scholarly labours of Professor Skeat, and the exhaustive analysis prepared by Sir James Murray, we are able to assert that the word *church*, though appearing in a somewhat different form, was known in West

Germanic speech so early as the fourth or fifth century of our era. Moreover, there is now general agreement among scholars in referring *church* to the Greek *κῡριακόν*. This word is strictly adjectival (neuter of *κῡριακός*) and means "of the lord," i.e. dominical (from *κῡριος* = lord). The term, however, is found to occur substantively, from the third or fourth century at least, in the sense of "house of the Lord," meaning a Christian place of worship. Writing on this phase of the subject, Sir James Murray declares that there is no other derivation, except that from *κῡριακόν*, which will bear scientific statement, much less examination.

The Greek origin of *church* has, nevertheless, been assailed, but without success. The counter-argument runs thus: the ordinary Greek name for *church* was *ἐκκλησία*, and this word, or *βασιλική* (*basilica*), was the name which passed into Latin and all the Romanic, as well as all the Celtic languages. In the last-named group we find, for example, the Irish and Gaelic *eglais*, and the Welsh *eglwys*. Hence there is "an *a priori* unlikelihood" that any other Greek equivalent (e.g. *κῡριακόν*) should have passed into the Teutonic languages. And, as a matter of history, we know that *ἐκκλησία* was actually adopted in Gothic, though only to represent a society or an assembly, not a place or building. So far, then, there is no convincing proof against the co-existence of a Gothic representative of *κῡριακόν*. Moreover, it seems clear that the other Teutonic tribes did not accept *ecclesia* on their conversion; yet one would suppose that this word, or its counterpart *basilica*, would have been adopted naturally. What was the reason for this non-acceptance? The answer is, that a Teutonic form of *κῡριακόν*, namely *kirika*, had already obtained a firm hold, and could not be dislodged. A minor argument against the proposed derivation is the rareness of the Greek word, but this objection has not much weight.

The objections against the early introduction of *kirika* are mainly historical. We do not know the actual circumstances in which *kirika*, as the representative of the Greek *κῡριακόν*, became so powerfully entrenched as to resist all the influence of Latin Christianity to supplant it. The word may have been

picked up by Teutonic invaders of the Roman Empire before those invaders had become Christianized. Curiously enough, this very question is discussed by a writer of the ninth century. But whatever may have been the cause of the transfer, the word *kirika* (church) was brought to England by the Angles and Saxons[1].

It is of some interest to find that the Latin equivalent, *dominicum*, of the two Greek words, was employed in the sense of "house of God," by the middle of the third century. To a certain extent this word was adopted in Old Irish, since *domnach* (mod. Irish, *domhnach*) is frequently used to denote a church[2].

Another detail, worth noting as we pass along, is the existence of a group of place-names which appear to contain *ecclesia* as a prefix. Out of a goodly list, we may mention Ecclesfield, Eccleshall, and Eccleston. It has been plausibly argued that these names could not have been given by the Saxons, who would have handed down words compounded with *church*, instead of *ecclesia*; that in fact, the group has an earlier history, dating from the days of Roman or Celtic Christianity. Only in this way, it is thought, could the Graeco-Latin term have formed part of a place-name. The objection to this theory—and it is a grave one—lies in the inability of its defenders to prove that the place-names possess the element *ecclesia* at all. Most, if not all, of the names, break down under examination. In brief, Professor Baldwin Brown, who has investigated the subject, declares against the pre-Saxon origin[3].

The remarkable theory to which allusion has been made, and towards which the reader has been gradually led, was propounded by Mr Sidney O. Addy, upon whose pages toll has already been freely levied. Starting from the accepted etymological data, which have just been outlined, Mr Addy produces a striking chain of testimony. He notices that, since *βασιλική*, like *κῡριακόν*, means a king's or lord's house, the words *church* and *basilica* are virtually identical terms. Searching for

[1] *New Oxford Dict.*, Skeat's *Etymol. Dict.*, under "Church." Cf. *Century Dict.*, which is in substantial agreement.

[2] *New Oxford Dict.*, *loc. cit.*

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, 1903, I. pp. 251–2.

evidence from North-West Spain, he found that the local council was summoned by the church bell, on Sundays, that is the *dies dominica*, or lord's day. The Spanish custom, moreover, "is only an accidental survival of what was once the universal practice in Western Europe[1]." In addition, the facts show that the Spanish court, which is now convened by the sound of the church bell, was formerly held in the church, and was originally analogous to the old Greek *ἐκκλησία*,—the meeting of citizens assembled by the crier (*ἐκκαλεῖν* = to call out)[2]. In Western Europe such a court was summoned by the bell or moot-horn. Thus, the bell in the campanile of old St Paul's Cathedral—an independent structure—summoned the citizens of London to the folk-moot[3]. The next link in the chain is supposed to be furnished by certain ancient English churches, which have apsidal terminations, and which possess, or formerly possessed, crypts. Of these churches, Brixworth, in Northamptonshire (cf. p. 9 *supra*), and Repton, in Derbyshire, are taken as types[4]. Mr Addy institutes comparisons between these old churches and the Roman basilicas, and again, between the crypts and the subterranean chambers of those basilicas. And undoubtedly the analogy is a very close one. From the harmony of design which the examination reveals, he infers that Roman and British structures alike were reared for the administration of public business and the dispensation of justice. His main conclusion is, that a new church "was the nucleus of a new liberty or free community." It was the "house" or public hall of a new lord, or chief (the lord of the manor), who presided over that community[5]. Another valuable line of evidence may be noted. Professor Baldwin Brown has called attention to the "coenacula," or upper chambers, which are found over the Western choir in some continental churches. These council chambers of the territorial chiefs prove, at least, the strong hold which the lord possessed over church affairs.

Several minor features are held to support the theory. A fresh interpretation is tendered of the much-discussed "squints"

[1] S. O. Addy, *Evol. of the Eng. House*, p. 187. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 182–3, 187.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 173, 187. Cf. Sir G. L. Gomme, *Prim. Folk-Moots*, p. 157.
[4] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* pp. 191–6.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 186. Cf. G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 324 n., II. p. 303.

or hagioscopes in churches. Respecting these curious apertures, folk-memory tells us nothing. Antiquaries have never secured complete unanimity on the subject, though it is usual to say that the openings were made to allow persons standing near the door or in the transept to see the elevation of the Host at the high altar. The "squints" sometimes pass through two or three walls in succession, and they very commonly point directly to the South, or main door of the building[1]. Mr Addy, however, conceives that the openings were so arranged in order to allow the doorkeeper (*ostiarius*)—the door-ward of Middle English times—to see the president of the assembly sitting in the chancel, and thus, directly or indirectly, to take orders from him. The chancel was the tribunal (*βῆμα*), where, behind a screen of lattice-work, sat the lord and his assessors. Since the altar, in the oldest English churches, such as those mentioned, was situated on "the chord of the apse," that is, just under the chancel arch, it is argued that the squints could not have been intended to enable persons to see the elevation of the Host[2]. It is also noted that the old name for the choir was the presbytery, or seat of the elders. The very word *πρεσβύτερος* was often applied to the "headman" of a village.

Furthermore, so early as A.D. 685, as shown by an inscription of undoubted authenticity, referring to the Saxon church at Jarrow, the English parish church was, in one instance, termed a basilica[3] (*Dedicatio basilicae*). The earliest reference in English literature, however, as given in the *New Oxford Dictionary*, is A.D. 1563[4].

Now Mr Addy's theory, which he supports with abundant details and illustrative comparisons, is surpassingly attractive to the archaeologist, especially to one who has grasped the fact of the former unity of secular and religious movements in the village commonwealth. The conclusions are, nevertheless, open

[1] J. H. Parker, *Glossary of Architect.*, 1850, under "Squint." Cf. R. Sturgis, *Dict. of Architect. and Building*, 1901, under "Hagioscope" and "Squint": B. and B. F. Fletcher, *Hist. of Architect.*, 1905, p. 692.

[2] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* pp. 183–4.

[3] *The Inventories and Account Rolls...of Jarrow and Monk-Wearmouth* (Surtees Society, Vol. XXIX.), p. xxvi.

[4] *New Oxford Dict.* under "Basilica."

to some criticism. At the outset, the theory seems to assume that the Roman secular basilica was the immediate prototype of the Christian church, and this assumption, as will be shown in a later chapter, runs contrary to the teaching of very good authorities. Again, though Mr Addy has adduced several examples of crypts connected with buildings in the basilican style of architecture, we have just seen that the word "basilica" itself, as applied to Christian churches, cannot be traced earlier than the seventh century. One would have rather expected to find the name given to the first Romano-British churches of the country. This absence of the term, it is true, is not a fatal objection. Nor does it lie in the mouth of those who believe, that, as in the case of fortress-towers, defensive designs outlasted their real use, to deny that the provision of crypts continued after their first purpose was forgotten. Hence, one is not disposed to cavil at the example adduced from Hornsea in the East Riding, where the present building dates no earlier than the fourteenth century. There was a church in Hornsea at the time of the Domesday survey, and there may have existed a crypt before the Norman Conquest.

A more serious objection is the anachronism, for so it seems, which makes English assemblies meet indoors at the early period when open-air courts were the rule. For we are not dealing with the Norman or the Plantagenet periods. That the old Greek assemblies were held in the basilicas may be true, but the earliest moots of which we have records in Britain were held out of doors. Little can be inferred from comparing the customs of peoples who occupied different social and political levels. The British open-air gatherings were doubtless in vogue before the days of the feudal lord, or even his pre-manorial prototype. From what has gone before, it will be readily supposed that the church built near the stronghold of the feudal chief was dominated by the lord or his representative. In this special sense, the church was, indeed, the "lord's house," because, if necessary, it was utilized as a court-room[1]. But that the "Lord's house" in England was ever primarily and essentially the "lord's house" (*κῡριακόν*), may be doubted. Leaving aside the question of origins, we

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 298.

require to know by what process that particular transition from the political to the religious use was made; if it were ever effected in this country at all. The English evidence rather shows that a reverse development took place: the "Lord's house" gradually became the "lord's house" in the limited sense just indicated. At any rate, before the time when churches began to be commonly used as secular trysting places, that is, in the late Saxon and the Norman periods, the word "church" itself was established in popular speech. And it remains to be proved that "basilica" ever was, to any appreciable extent, an alternative term. Expressed otherwise, we may say that the word "church" would, by the time of the introduction of Christianity to Britain, have lost its primary Greek connotation, and this would scarcely be revived and transferred to Christian churches reared under a new set of conditions.

With respect to the squints, is it claimed that the early basilicas possessed similar apertures, or that these familiar skew openings were the rule, even in those churches which are most closely connected with the moated fortress? One does not overlook the abundance of squints in the churches of such a district as that around Tenby, nor forget that these buildings exhibit defensive features (p. 113 *supra*). Were the problem concerned with South Pembrokeshire as a self-contained country, the theory of the lord and his door-keeper would seem more plausible. As the facts stand, however, it is more reasonable to rely on the old, if incomplete, explanation that a line of squints permitted the door-keeper to see the altar and to ring the Sanctus bell at a given moment. Numerous minor difficulties are involved in Mr Addy's theory. The squints are often on the North side of the building, and are not in the line of communication with the Southern door. Again, they are frequently seen in chantries and transepts, where they point to the interior of the sanctuary, if not to the altar itself, as at Whatley, in Somerset, or Leatherhead, Surrey (Fig. 36). Still further, the squints, on the whole, belong to the post-Norman period of architecture, when constructional decoration, as well as utility, was kept in view by the builders.

In the light of comparative custom, the theory of the "lord's

house" may, at first sight, appear tenable. Indeed, there may have been a time in the history of Greece when this hypothesis corresponded to the facts. Applied to this country, however, and tested in details, the theory seems to fail, and can only be countenanced with great qualifications.

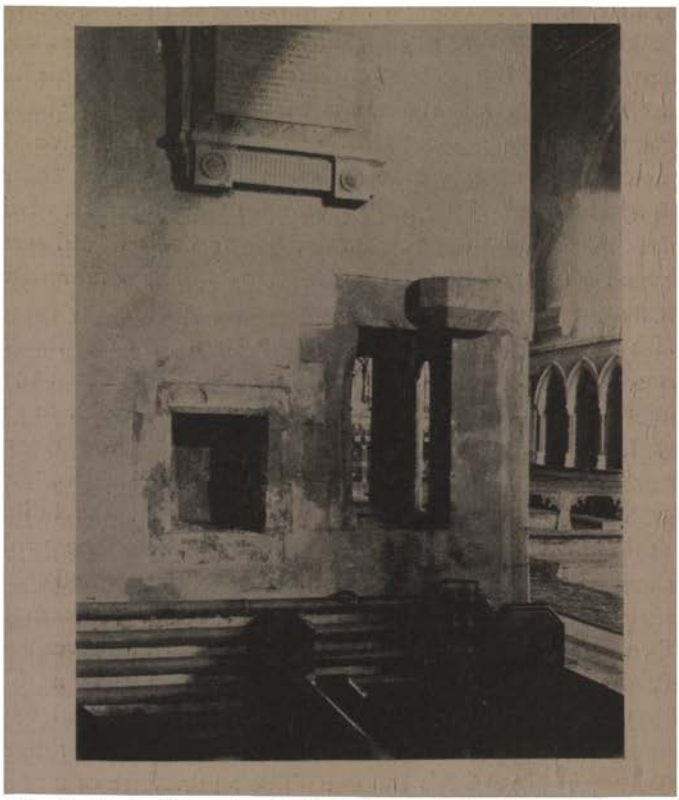

FIG. 36. Squint in East wall of North transept, Leatherhead church, Surrey. Persons sitting in the portion of the transept shown in the illustration can see the altar through the squint.

In the last chapter, allusion was made to the church porch as a centre of public life, and this part of the building has just come under notice again in connection with the door-ward. A few further remarks may now be added. The church porch was often of great size (Fig. 37). The practice of holding schools in the porch is well attested. In Derbyshire villages, such as

Hope and Tideswell, the former existence of the porch-school rests on tradition alone. But John Evelyn, referring to the year 1624, says definitely that "one Frier taught us at the church porch at Wotton," in Surrey[1]. The Surrey historian, William

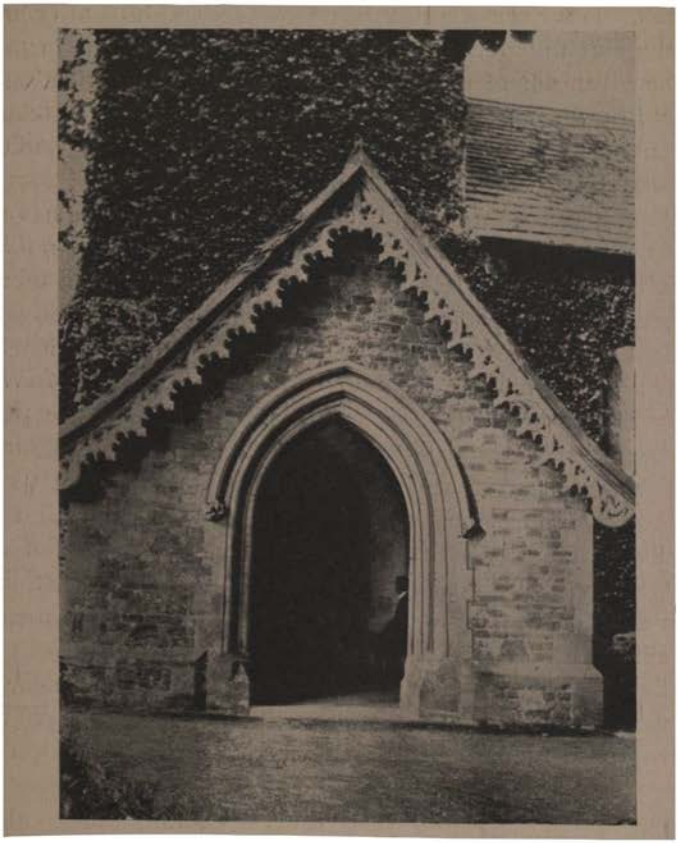

FIG. 37. Stone porch, Wotton church, Surrey. The inner doorway dates from c. A.D. 1200, but the porch itself belongs to the 13th or 14th century. Internal measurements, 14 ft × 11 ft approx. The outer doorway and the inside arcade are modern restorations. The barge board is of the Decorated period.

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* pp. 185–6. J. Evelyn, *Diary* (ed. W. Bray, 1818), "Chandos Classics" edition, N. D. p. 19; cf. p. ix. Dr J. C. Cox, in his *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, p. 118, considers that the porch must have had an upper room in Evelyn's day. G. S. Tyack, in *Eccles. Curiosities*, ed. W. Andrews, 1889, p. 27. *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XI. pp. 366, 394, 472; XII. pp. 37, 277, 334. *Twelfth Night*, Act III. Sc 2.

Bray, writing in A.D. 1818, asserts that the village schoolmaster of Wotton taught over the porch, and considers it "not altogether incurious to observe" that the son of a man of very considerable fortune should receive his first rudiments of learning in such a school. There was another school during the sixteenth century over the porch of St Sepulchre's, London. A few more instances may be given where porch-schools existed. St Michael's Loft, in the Priory Church, Christchurch, Hants; the parish church, Cheltenham; Selby Abbey (in a room over a chapel); Berkeley, Gloucestershire (until 1870); and Malmesbury (until 1879, or later). An interesting expression, of which little note has been made, occurs in *Twelfth Night*, Act III. Sc. 2. Maria, referring to Malvolio, says, "He's in yellow stockings." "And cross-gartered?" queries Sir Toby Belch. "Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school in the church," runs the disdainful reply. Schools held in the body of the church have also been known in our own time, for they usually survived the porch-schools proper.

It is suggested that the stone seats often found in the porch were used as benches for the children who came to be taught or catechized. Setting aside the fact that wooden seats are also met with, it is not inherently improbable that stone ledges should have been used, particularly when we remember the chilly, comfortless fittings so familiar in monastic cloisters and chapter houses. These benches, too, may have been covered with straw or rushes. But it is more likely that the schools were held in those rooms which are constantly seen built over the porch. Here, in some parishes, the ostiarius (from *ostium* = door), who was to develop into the "usher" of the public school, probably taught his little flock of pupils[1]. The ostiarius, it may be recollected, belonged at first to one of the minor orders of the church. Occasionally a chantry priest had this duty of teaching allotted to him. It will be remembered that Roman schools were held in a verandah partly open to the street. Some of the upper chambers of porches are fitted with fireplaces. When provided with a squint, the room may have been intended to lodge a priest, whose duty it was to keep alight the sacred fire on the

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 185.

altar, or to house a watchman who had to guard the treasure. Often the porch-chambers have degenerated into lumber rooms. At times, as we shall see later, armour was stored in them. In many porch-chambers libraries existed[1], and, in others, documents were preserved. When employed for teaching purposes, the chamber was proportionately large[2]. In place of the overhead chamber, a gallery of oak or stone is sometimes found around the inside of the porch. Galleries of this kind, to which access is obtained by staircases, either in, or passing up the wall, are to be seen at Bildeston, Suffolk, Weston-in-Gordano, Somerset, and several other places. These "eminences" are usually believed to have accommodated the singers at weddings and festivals, and, more especially, on Palm Sunday[3]. In passing, we are obliged to notice the term "parvis" or "parvise" which is commonly used to describe the room above the porch. The usage, though fixed, is erroneous, for a parvise is strictly the enclosed space before the door of a church or cathedral. The application of the word to a porch-chamber has no precedent earlier than the nineteenth century[4].

That much informal business was carried on in the porch has been previously noted (p. 143 *supra*). Under this sheltering pent-house the layman met his fellows to arrange slight matters of public interest. In Saxon days, the finder of a stray beast would bring it to the porch, and there, in the presence of the priest and the reeve of the tun, would exhibit the animal to all possible claimants[5]. The church porch has, in fact, always been a favourite resort for the performance of certain business. In 1610, we hear of mortgages being paid off in the South porch of Ecclesfield church, near Sheffield. Welsh instances prove that rent for lands was sometimes brought to the church porch. Mrs C. King Warry, who has made a careful study of the folk-customs of the Isle of Portland, describes a practice which helps

[1] J. H. Parker, *op. cit.* under "Parvise." *Antiquary*, 1899, XXXV. p. 179.

[2] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 370.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., X. p. 396; XI. pp. 9–10, 136.

[4] *New Oxford Dict.* under "Parvis." See also discussion in *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XI. pp. 49, 91, 149, 197.

[5] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 370–1. S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 180. *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. pp. 168, 238, 413.

us to realize the business methods of our ancestors. The practice, which exists to-day, is a survival of the old pre-feudal mode of conveyance by "church-gift." A father, wishing to bequeath his paddock (i.e. a small enclosure of land, with the freedom of quarrying stone therein) to his four daughters, let us suppose, proceeds in the following manner. He divides the property by means of partition walls into the requisite number of shares. Then, after the church service on Sunday evening, he conveys the property by word of mouth in the church porch. An old manuscript describes the ceremony: "The churchwardens, and some of the best inhabitants" assemble in the porch, when the testator thus expresses himself: "I, A....., desire you, my neighbours, to take notice that I give to each of my daughters an equal share of my Paddock, called....., and bounded....., as it now lys divided into four parts." "Wherefore," continues the manuscript, "the assembly rises and blesses (by name) the daughters[1]." It is necessary only to add that the Portland custom can be paralleled from other parts of the country.

Students of English literature will have noticed that marriages in the church porch were once common. Chaucer makes the "Wife of Bath" speak thus: "Housbondes at chirche-dore I have had fyve[2]." The allusion to the church-door is not mere rhetorical licence. According to the Sarum service, the marriage ceremony was performed in the porch (*ante ostium ecclesiae*), the nuptial benediction being pronounced at the altar afterwards. It was only when the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. was issued that the rubric was thus settled: "The persons to be married shall come into the body of the Church," and this version has been retained to the present time[3].

Several minor details might be noted to illustrate the secular uses of the porch. Frequently the parson used the porch as a temporary stable for his horse, and, although such action is

[1] C. King Warry, *Old Portland Traditions*, 1908, pp. 50–1. Cf. *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VIII. pp. 81, 134, 248, 432.

[2] Chaucer, *Wife of Bath's 'Prologue,'* l. 6 (W. W. Skeat's edition, 1894, p. 320).

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 371. G. S. Tyack, in *Eccles. Curiosities*, pp. 25–6. J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Sir H. Ellis, 1849, II. pp. 133–5. F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life in Mediaeval England*, 1906, pp. 209–10.

now held to call for interference on the part of the churchwardens[1] we may confidently say that public opinion has not always discountenanced the practice. Occasionally, one meets with old "stirrup stones" or "jossing blocks," placed in such positions as to show that no prohibition could have been effectively in force against the horseman who brought his steed to church. One of these stoops still remains at the gate of Duddington churchyard, near Edinburgh, while at Edlington, Lincolnshire, the mounting block is actually fixed on the North side of the porch[2]. Doubtless, a careful search would show that many more examples remain.

Only when we have fully recognized the vitality of ancient superstitions and customs, shall we appreciate certain lingering practices connected with the porch. John Aubrey saw, in the porch of a Suffolk church, a horseshoe fixed on the wall to keep away the witches. The numerous authenticated cases of portions of human skin having been found nailed to church doors also bear on the point. Such instances carry us back, not simply to the period when the secular and the religious were combined in one mode of thought and action, but to a still earlier time when the Christian teachers could not, or would not, repress the savagery of paganism. The fragments of skin served to warn sacrilegious robbers that they, too, ran the risk of being flayed alive.

It was casually mentioned, in a preceding paragraph, that armour was sometimes stored in the porch-chamber. The subject will repay a little further examination, because it has not yet received the attention which it merits. Nor, even now, have we sufficient material available to give very positive decisions. From the time of Edward I. onwards, every parish was bound to keep in readiness an amount of armour in proportion to its population. By the time of Henry VIII., as already stated (p. 142 *supra*), this obligation was vested primarily in the churchwardens. The churchwardens were evidently the deputies of the constables, and these, in turn, were the representatives of the sheriff, who was ultimately responsible, both for the parish arms

[1] *Prideaux's Churchwarden's Guide*, ed. F. C. Mackarness, 1895, p. 321.

[2] *Antiquary*, 1899, XXXV. p. 178.

and for the training of the soldiers. Yet, before this period, the clergy, as well as the laity, were assessed for arms. Whoever was answerable for the observance of the law is a question which does not greatly concern us for the present. The most interesting part of the problem touches the storage of the armour. The subject was discussed in a valuable article by Miss Ethel Lega-Weekes in *Notes and Queries* for 1909[1]. Was either the nave or the porch used as an armoury? or were the weapons housed elsewhere? These are questions to which one would fain get an answer.

The writer of the article which has just been cited considers it an open question whether the expression "church armour," occurring in old documents, means the same as "town armour," or "parish armour." With respect to storage, it is admitted that arms may have been deposited in the church, though there has not been discovered any law or regulation enforcing this practice. It is argued that the church would be damp and unsuited for the keeping of armour: arms may have been deposited in churches, but it was such as had fallen into disuse or become obsolete. At once we may grant that iron weapons and body-coverings needed to be carefully treasured. Professor Vinogradoff pertinently observes that, in the eleventh century, well-forged helmets and swords were scarce and expensive[2]. Yet one imagines that, down to the end of the Wars of the Roses, at any rate, there was little chance for either arms or armour to rust away. The monumental armour which is found in churches is rusty and half-perished, but how many times has it been taken down since it was first suspended over the tomb? It is said that the churches of the fighting period possessed no snug, weather-proof vestries, where arms could be safely protected. But there existed chantry chapels, as well as porch-chambers, both of which might have served. Again, is it so certain that the church was markedly damp—less dry, shall we say, than the outbuildings of a feudal castle, where doubtless considerable quantities of armour were once preserved? We shall shortly see that the church was not deemed unfit for the storage of

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., XI. pp. 422–4. See also 12th Ser., II. pp. 130–1.

[2] P. Vinogradoff, *Eng. Society in the Eleventh Century*, 1908, p. 30.

goods. If any building were kept in a weather-tight condition, surely the church was that building. In villages where no "church house" or tithe barn existed, one is inclined to think, for several reasons, that some of the armour, when not in use, was placed in the church. The clues which lead to this opinion will be gathered together in the next few lines.

We may leave out of the discussion the mouldering helmets and crumbling swords which hang derelict over many an altar tomb, and which were oftentimes specially made for purposes of commemoration. These arms, "undertakers' properties," as someone has well called them, are irrelevant to the general question, and are apt to prejudice an examination. Fortunately, we possess a little definite evidence as to the housing of the "town's armour" in churches. A large equipment of such armour, of which Dr J. C. Cox gives a detailed inventory, was kept in a room over the South porch of Repton church, Derbyshire, down to the year 1840[1]. This collection comprised "corsletts," "pickes," "calevers," halberds, swords, a flask and touch-box, with many other requisites. The parish books distinctly speak of the store as the "Townes Armore." In the steeple of the parish church of Darley, also in Derbyshire, "harness and weapons" were, during the first year of Elizabeth, kept in readiness for one bill-man and one archer[2]. The poverty of this store excites a little surprise, and the explanation is not immediately forthcoming. But doubtless the population of Darley was then small, and the assessment would be proportionately low. A hoard of old armour was lighted upon accidently at Baldock, Hertfordshire—again in a chamber above the porch, which had been closed for many years. The available space was nearly choked up with armour and helmets, as well as with pikes and other weapons. Although the local historian considers that the chamber was merely the lumber room for arms removed from tombs, Dr Cox, with more reason, perhaps, considers that the relics were representative of the old store of the town's armour.

Quite recently, in the early part of the year 1910, a discovery

[1] J. C. Cox, in *Curious Church Customs*, ed. W. Andrews, pp. 179–80.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 180.

of great corroborative value was made at Mendlesham church, in Suffolk. Over the South porch of the church is a remarkable room, locally known as the "Priest's Chamber." The ceiling and walls are lined with oak planks, the windows are strongly barred, and the iron-plated doors are fitted with "log locks." Hidden within this chamber was found a fine collection of parish armour, consisting, in all, of twenty-three "lots." The hoard contained several rare specimens, such as the "gusset" of a breast-plate, two pairs of arm defences, and an early pauldron, or shoulder-guard. Mr Seymour Lucas, who inspected the armour, stated that the earliest portions belonged to the closing years of the fifteenth century. There can be little doubt that here, at any rate, we have a genuine instance of the storage of armour in churches, and that these decaying relics belonged to the fighting men of Mendlesham[1].

There are numerous scraps of evidence which tend incidentally to support the theory. We may look for some of these when we come to discuss the churchyard yew (Chap. IX.). More directly bearing on the point, however, is the former existence of societies, in close connection with the church, known by such names as "Robin Hood guilds[2]." These clubs appear to have been occasionally formed to promote skill in archery, though, in some instances, they may have consisted of mummers and morris dancers (cf. p. 184 *infra*). Nevertheless, in the case of the Abbots Bromley horn dancers, shortly to be noticed, it is the cross-bow man, not the "hobby horse," who is called Robin Hood.

It would be a great exaggeration to say that the church was the only place which was likely to be used as an armoury. Here and there, tithe barns and "church houses" would be available as storehouses. The squire's mansion or the constable's farmhouse—for that official would usually be a yeoman—were

[1] *Antiquary*, 1910, N. S., VI. p. 122. It has been stated that every parish church in the Isle of Wight formerly possessed its gun. Brading gun, now preserved at Nunwell, is the only specimen left. (*Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., II. p. 176.)

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., I. p. 346, II. p. 16. An attempt has been made to connect the Robin Hood Dancers with a survival of the solar myth, and to show that certain place-names, said to be compounded from *Robin Hood*, designate pagan sites (*Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., I. pp. 493–4). *Folk-Lore*, 1910, XXI. p. 248 n.

possible repositories. But the church was, after all, the centre of parish life, so that any reasons against the storage of weapons in the sacred building would be of a practical, not a religious kind.

There is a curious passage in a treatise written by the old Swedish historian, Olaus Magnus, titular Archbishop of Upsala, which deals with a side-question relating to our subject. Writing in A.D. 1555, under the section entitled "*De secura positione armorum in atrio Ecclesiae*," and alluding to Northern nations generally, he says, "*Templa, seu Ecclesias parochiales ingressüri ruricolae Septentrionis, ante valvas, sive in atrio absque ulla furti suspicione praedicta arma donec divina absolvuntur, praecipue tempore pacis deponunt, rursusque ad propria reversuri resumunt*[1]." We may translate this as follows: Before the countryfolk of the North enter the temples or parish churches, they place the aforesaid arms in front of the door or in the porch, with no suspicion of theft, until the service is finished, especially during times of peace, and take them up again when about to return to their own affairs. Of what did the "aforesaid" arms consist, and what was the motive of bringing them to church at all? These questions are explicitly answered by the writer. When these Northern folk came from remote villages to be present at baptisms, they were allowed to bring three kinds of weapons, the bow, the sword, and the axe, and nothing besides (*praeter ballistam, gladium, et securim*). It was foreseen, and admitted, that the wayfarers would need a sword and a bow to keep wolves at bay and to defend themselves against robbers, while an axe would be necessary to lop off branches of trees which were obstacles in the way, or to repair bridges which had broken down[2]. Clearly, then, we have here a limitation of privileges. The old volume has a quaint illustration of arms piled up under an arch or in a vault. Why were the arms restricted in kind and number? Without doubt, to prevent brawling and quarrelling within the precincts of the church. However, storage in the church was allowed, and to this extent we have a profitable analogy. The only difference was that, according to English usage, the weapons

[1] Olaus Magnus, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, 1555, l. xvi. c. 21.

[2] *Ibid.* l. xvi. c. 20.

were stowed away for a time more or less indefinite. In the Northern solitudes permanent storage in the church may have been both inconvenient and dangerous. The inhabitants were probably unruly and undisciplined. The great point of likeness between the British and Scandinavian cases lies in the tacit acknowledgement that arms did not defile a church.

It is not easy, indeed, to imagine why the history of customs should be different from that just presented. If we look at the factors aright, we find ourselves witnesses of the supremacy of the doctrine of social convenience. The priesthood, at times, no doubt, rebelled against the grosser intrusions of the laity, but for the most part there was acquiescence, if not partnership, in what would now be called sacrilege, or at least improper use of the church. The needs of the community over-rode all theoretical scruples. Did the villager wish to tell the hour of the day? Then the church-dial met his needs. From the earliest times, sundials were probably attached to churches. A portion of such a dial, bearing a Runic inscription, and belonging to a date somewhere between A.D. 1063 and 1065, was unearthed at Skelton churchyard, in Cleveland[1]. The well-known dial at Kirkdale church, Yorkshire, belongs to a slightly earlier period. Pre-Conquest mural dials, or at least, dial-stones, exist at Warnford, and Corhampton, in Hampshire, Stoke D'Abernon, in Surrey, Bishopstone, in Sussex (Figs. 38, 39), and other places. When the dial was gradually being superseded by clocks, these were set up in the church tower. The new timekeepers long remained scarce, but even when they had come to be generally used by private persons, the public clock held its own. The weather-cock, too, was found to be of great utility, and was rarely lacking on tower or spire. As with the vane, so with the cresset, or fire-pan, in which tar or tow was burnt to guide the traveller, or to arouse the countryside. The old iron cresset on Monken Hadley tower, in Middlesex, which directed the lonely wayfarer across Enfield Chase, may still be seen. Another cresset, placed

[1] *Reliquary*, 1892, N. S., VI. pp. 65–67. Cf. Dissertation by Olaus Magnus, *op. cit.* l. I. cc. 32, 33. Several Saxon dial-stones are described in *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.*, XV. pp. 74–77; XXI. pp. 86–88. See also J. C. Cox, *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, p. 190. G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* II. p. 131.

above an angle of the chancel at Alnwick, in Northumberland, was employed to signal an alarm[1]. The branks, or scold's bridles, barbarous relics of an earlier time, of which some thirteen are still believed to exist in Cheshire alone, seem to have been

FIG. 38. Pre-conquest dial-stone, Bishopstone church, Sussex. The porch, as a whole, is believed to be of Saxon date; it contains a little long-and-short work. The chevron ornament, under the pediment, is evidently the later work of Norman artificers (c. A.D. 1120). An enlargement of the dial is given in Fig. 39.

occasionally stored in churches. At least, the famous specimen at Walton-on-the-Thames, Surrey, is to be found in the vestry of the church. In several churches one may notice the old manual fire-engine placed under the church tower, and we may

[1] *Antiquary*, 1899, XXXV. p. 360.

feel sure that its valuable aid was not confined to fires which broke out in the church. In short, we can scarcely limit the possible conveniences which were centred around the church fabric. Chained books and libraries, which were particularly numerous; records of charitable bequests; the registers with their details of the lives of individual villagers; the churchyard monumental records; nay, the reputation of the curative simples of the very walls—pellitory, whitlow grass, and spleenwort; who shall tell of all these? There is no doubt that decorative or

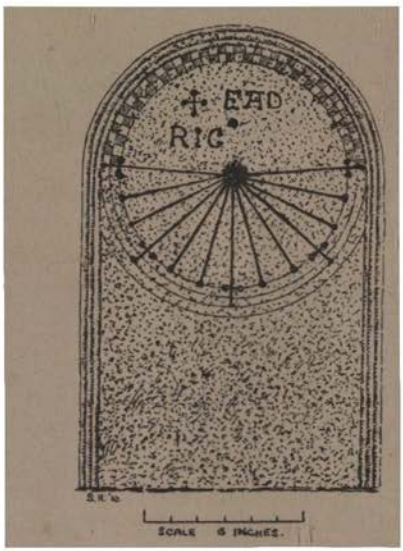

FIG. 39. Bishopstone dial, enlarged. The five principal Day Hours, 6, 9, 12, 3, 6 o'clock, are shown by slightly prolonged lines with cruciform terminations. The first and last radii are drawn at a slight angle with the diameter. The upper semicircle contains a cross, and is surrounded with an ornamental border, usually described, and figured, as a fret; close examination seems to show that it is billet work in low relief. It is not known to whom the name Eadric refers: he was probably an ecclesiastic.

symbolical considerations were often uppermost in the minds of later designers. The gilded weathercock was given a religious significance, though its origin may have been pagan; the dial bore an appropriate motto. But no ulterior purpose, either artistic or symbolical, is connected with the village stocks or the pillory. These instruments were severely practical.

Seeing that courts were formerly held in the church, it must have been expedient to have the stocks fixed near the place of trial, so that prisoners might quickly be placed where village life was busiest. One cannot go so far as to assert, with some writers, that the churchyard was the usual situation for these instruments. If the statement were amended so as to read, "in or near the churchyard," it would command assent. In the majority of instances, the stocks which remain seem to be in the village street, or on the village green, though generally not a stone's throw from the church. At Brading, Isle of Wight, they are housed in a building near the entrance to the churchyard. At Hessle and Kirk Ella, in Yorkshire, and at South Harting, in Sussex, they are placed by the church gate; in the Surrey villages of Alfold and Shalford, as well as at Brent Pelham, in Hertford[1], they occupy a like position. The weather-worn stocks of Shalford are shown in Fig. 40. The specimen at Kilham, Yorkshire, stands against the churchyard wall; while about 100 yards away, the old bull-ring may be seen[2]. Havering-atte-Bower, in Essex, has its stocks set up by the side of the green under an immense hollow elm, opposite to a whipping-post. In the following places the stocks are also adjacent to the churchyard: Abinger, Surrey (on the green); Walton-on-the-Hill, near Liverpool[3]; Waltham Abbey, Essex[4]; Weston-under-Redcastle, Salop[5]; and, formerly, Prestbury, Gloucestershire[6]. Within the churchyard itself we have examples at Burnsall, Yorkshire; Mottistone, Isle of Wight; and Crowle, in Lincolnshire. The stocks at Mottistone are very dilapidated; those at Crowle have been used within living memory[7]. Formerly stocks were kept in the Minster Yard at York, and there was a movable pair in the yard at Beverley Minster[8]. Lastly, to conclude this fragmentary list, we notice the stocks of Northorpe, Lincolnshire, which were kept in the church tower[9].

[1] *Bygone Hertfordshire*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p. 153.
[2] *Trans. East Riding Antiq. Soc.*, 1895, III. pp. 48–9.
[3] G. S. Tyack, *op. cit.* p. 74.
[4] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., XII. p. 297.
[5] *Ibid.* XII. p. 486.
[6] *Ibid.* IX. p. 479.
[7] G. S. Tyack, *op. cit.* p. 74.
[8] J. Nicholson, in *Curious Church Customs*, p. 157.
[9] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., IX. p. 479.

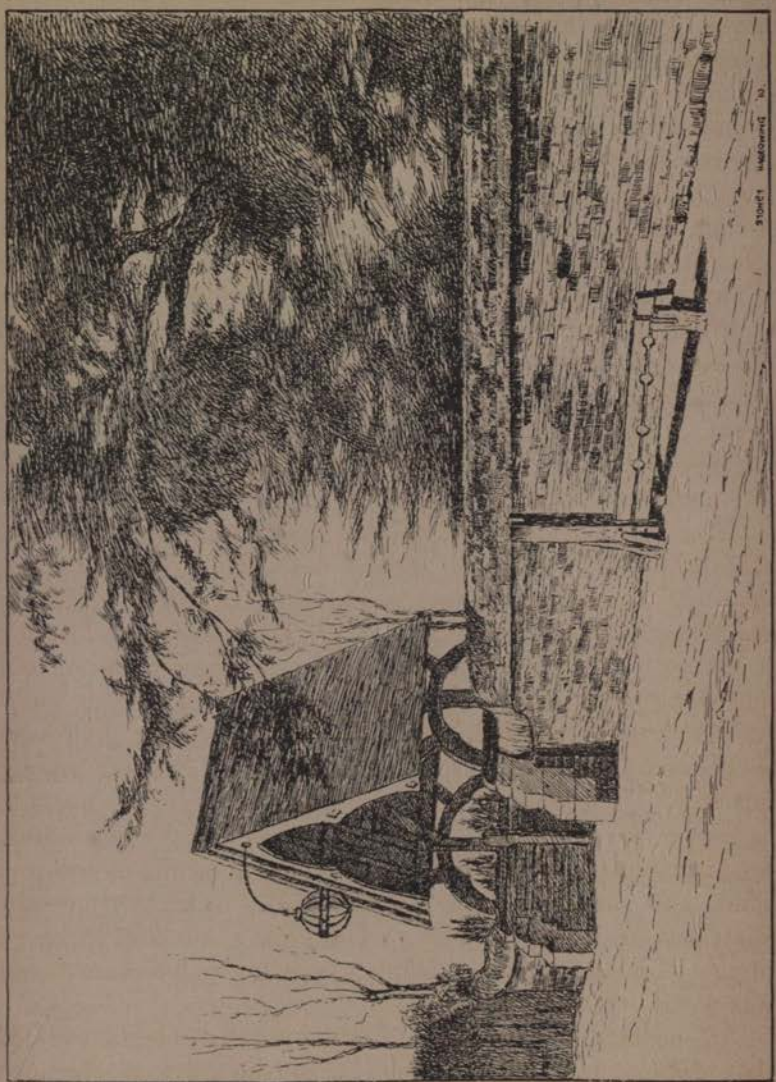

FIG. 40. Remains of stocks, outside Shalford churchyard, Surrey.

Most of the stocks which remain are perhaps not remarkably ancient. The institution, however, has a long history. Stocks are referred to in a priory charter, dated A.D. 1324, under the name of *cippi*. In the statute 25 Edward III. 1350, they appear as *coppes*; while by 7 Henry VI., c. 17, every village or town is to provide itself with a pair of stocks[1]. We can easily picture for ourselves the Mediaeval village with its institutions massed together as closely as possible around a central spot. Castle, church, court-house, tithe-barn, playing green and archery ground; the cross and the yew; the stocks and pillory; the pound and the maypole, were complementary to the usual group of farmsteads and cottages, and helped to relieve a landscape which in the pre-enclosure period was often quiet and bare. We may see baron and priest, representing the civil and the ecclesiastical powers, sitting side by side, to arrange feudal services, tolls, and holidays, to allocate tithes and settle disputes, to assess fines and declare sentences; while ever at hand waited the instruments of punishment.

Here we may make reference to a very curious relic of the old courts. Chained to the wall of the vestry in Wateringbury church, in Kent, is an official mace known locally as the "Dumb borsholder" (*pr.* buzzelder) of Chart. This wooden staff, which is a little over three feet in length, is surmounted by an iron ring, while the lower end is tipped with a square iron spike. At the annual court leet, the head man of the tithing of Pizein Well, in the manor of Chart, appeared before the meeting bearing this staff. Thus armed, and provided with the necessary warrant, he might search for goods unlawfully concealed. The tradition runs that he was empowered to break in, by means of the iron spike, the doors of those who resisted his authority. The Wateringbury mace, which is probably the symbolical successor of the more warlike clubs employed in the old Saxon moots, was in use down to A.D. 1748[2].

In speaking of the so-called parvise, it was incidentally stated that documents were sometimes preserved in that chamber. The storage of deeds and documents in churches has a history

[1] *Ibid.* 7th Ser., I. p. 491.

[2] B. P. Row and W. Stanley Martin, *Kent's Capital*, 2nd edition, 1899, pp. 52–3. Murray, *Handbook for Kent*, 3rd edition, 1892, pp. 62–3.

both ancient and continuous. The scope of the underlying principle is much wider than the needs of any particular social or political system, whether the framework of that system be manorial or extra-manorial. From the foundation of the Christian church in Britain the priest seems to have been a kind of banker, just as, in an informal manner, he was the village notary. An attenuated survival of the old order of things is seen in the rubric appended to "The Order for the Visitation of the Sick," in our modern Prayer Book. The minister is told to admonish the sick man to make his will. More than this: men are often to be "put in remembrance" to settle all such business "whilst they are in health." On the fly-leaves of the ancient altar-books were written various kinds of memoranda referring to sales and other transactions. An appeal to an entry in a "Christ's Book," or a "Gospel Book," as representing a genuine legal record, was considered decisive[1]. Again, the manumission of slaves, an act of a semi-legal character, was probably performed at the altar, and an entry of the proceedings was made in the "church-book[2]." Of the preservation of Court Rolls in churches, we have numerous instances, ranging from the time of Canute onwards. The latest record at hand is that of the Manor of Howden, Yorkshire, the rolls of which were retained in the parish church so recently as A.D. 1809[3].

There can be little doubt that some of the old oaken church chests (Figs. 41, 42, 50) strongly clamped with iron, each furnished with an exceedingly elaborate, though clumsy, arrangement of locks, were utilized for keeping, not only the church books, registers, and vestments, but many of the parchments and manuscripts of which we are speaking. It is asserted that the ordinary parish church possessed two or three chests; where one alone has been preserved to hold the registers and other documents, it is usually the least attractive and valuable. The specimen from Llanelian in Denbigh (Fig. 41) is hewn from a single block of wood. The chest from Rainham in Essex (Fig. 42) is

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 371–2.

[2] P. Vinogradoff, *Eng. Soc. in the Eleventh Century*, p. 468–9.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 305. For further evidence, see *Extracts from the Court Rolls of the Manor of Wimbledon* (Surrey), 1866, pp. 297, 386.

handsomely carved with ornament of the Perpendicular period. It was not the provision of locks and bolts alone which gave security: stronger far was the acknowledged repute of the building itself,

FIG. 41. Church chest, Llanelian, Denbigh. Hewn from a single block of timber. The dog-tongs, seen on the left, are made on the principle of the compound lever. Initials, and the date, 1748, are cut in the bars of the tongs.

FIG. 42. Church chest, Rainham, Essex. Date: second half of the fourteenth century. The carving belongs to the early Perpendicular period.

and the dread of the consequences of sacrilege. Behind the high altar of St Paul's Cathedral there was formerly such a chest, in

which deeds were protected[1]. Some of the remaining church coffers are skilfully carved and afford good examples of the decorative art of the architectural period to which they belong[2]. The subject merits separate examination, but the most that can be done here is to remind the reader of the broad outlines. The fact that wills were commonly deposited for safety in ecclesiastical buildings, is too well known to require emphasis. The huge collections of wills in the cathedrals of Gloucester and York, for example, at once spring to memory. We may also recall the right of sanctuary, which was vested in the church and the churchyard. Again, the Synod of Westminster, A.D. 1142, granted certain immunities, probably freedom from seizure for debt, to ploughs and other agricultural implements placed in the churchyard. All these details agree well with the theories of social convenience and unwritten religious compact.

We commenced our survey by inspecting the towers of certain churches, and afterwards, it will be remembered, we began to discuss the secular uses of the nave. This has led us to examine some historical facts connected with the church porch, which, ecclesiastically, as well as architecturally, is an integral part of the building. Indeed, it was this very inability to separate the porch from the fabric as a whole which compelled us to linger by the way. We must now retrace our steps in order to garner some further details respecting the nave, and to substantiate the assertion that the body of the church was not devoted to worship alone. One cardinal fact to be borne in mind is, that the nave was essentially the property of the parishioners, who were liable for its repair, in the same way that the rector was responsible for the upkeep of the chancel. This proposition is well attested by the canons of the church, and by all ecclesiastical writers of repute. Partly as a consequence of this separation of interests, and partly in deference to the accepted ethics of both the pre-Norman and post-Norman periods, the nave was allowed to be put to a variety of uses. In the words of Jeaffreson, "The Mediaeval nave, by turns, or simultaneously,

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 180. An extensive list of church chests is given in *Eng. Church Furniture*, by J. C. Cox and A. Harvey, 1907, pp. 291–307.

[2] *Eccles. Curiosities*, ed. W. Andrews, 1899, pp. 161–182.

was a public-hall, a theatre, a warehouse, a market, a court of justice, and a place of worship; but the chancel was rigidly reserved for the mysteries and sublime offices of priestly service[1]." Already we have glanced at the judicial and legislative aspects of the question; we may now consider the remaining features. Serving the purpose of a warehouse, the thirteenth century church was sometimes used for the storage of corn and wool,

FIG. 43. Fourteenth century barn, Barton Farm, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire. From the South-West. The barn exhibits numerous Gothic features of the period; angle buttresses, transept-like porches, gable crosses, &c. The windows, of which those at the ends are cruciform, are narrow slits, with wide splays internally. The Glastonbury barn is one of the finest in the country; the parochial tithe-barn was a much smaller building.

a small fee being paid to the clergy for the accommodation[2]. The practice may not have been usual, but it does not seem to have been rare. For the reception of the grain and fodder which was paid to the church in kind, there was, as we know, the spacious tithe-barn (Figs. 43, 44). But other persons besides

[1] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* II. p. 2.

[2] J. E. Thorold Rogers, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, 1899, p. 66.

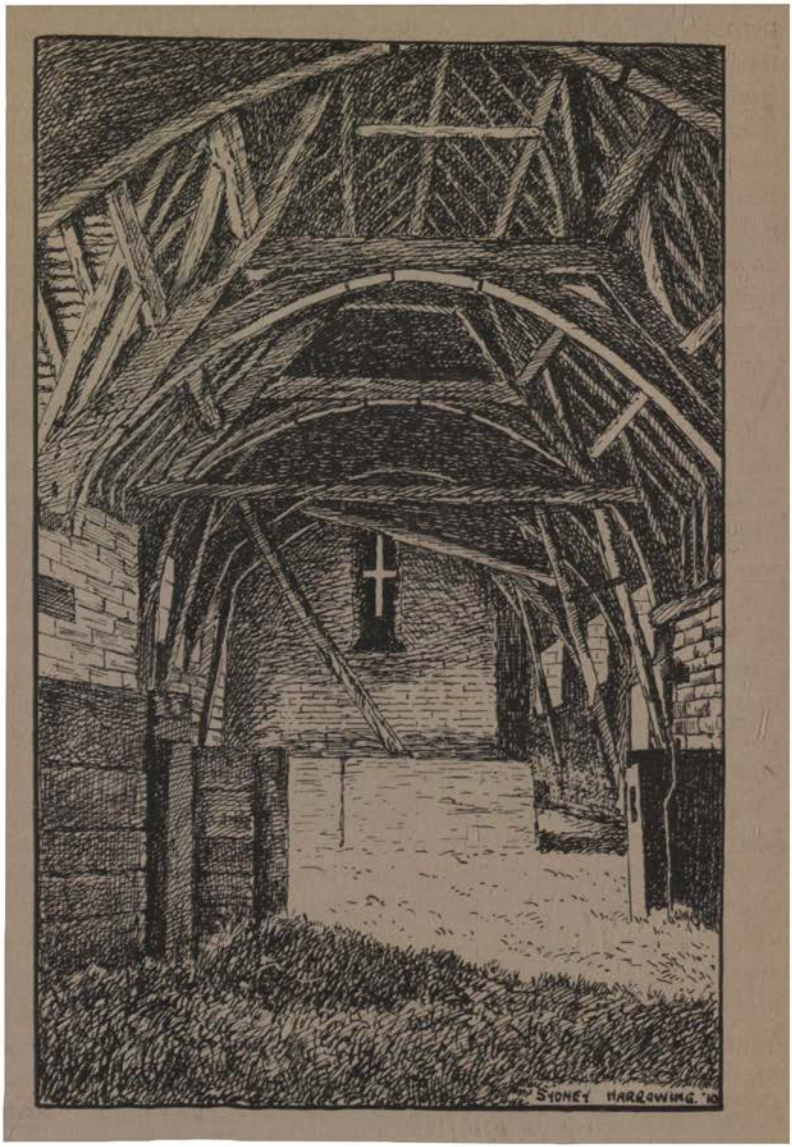

FIG. 44. Interior of barn, Bradford-on-Avon. The windows, which, viewed from the outside (Fig. 43), were narrow slits, are here seen to have a wide internal splay. The timber roof is remarkably fine. Internal measurements 85 ft × 25¾ ft.

abbot or priest were often anxious to store goods temporarily—perhaps against the time of the village fair or feast—and hence the nave of the church became, for the time, a granary or barn. Bread was stored in churches so recently as A.D. 1665[1]. The English village possessed few buildings, other than the church, which were both capacious and weather-proof. Previous to the Reformation, it must be observed, fixed pews were not often found in churches; at the most, the worshippers were supplied only with movable benches. These benches could be cleared away in times of emergency, and the nave was thus admirably fitted to receive merchandise, such as sacks of wheat, wool-packs, and boxes of treasure. Comparatively large quantities of produce could be packed in the space thus set free.

The evidence that the nave was extensively used as a market-hall is not abundant. In view of the repeated attempts to enforce the Scriptural principle respecting the House of Prayer, we have some difficulty in distinguishing between what was considered lawful and what profane. Manifestly, it would have puzzled the bishop or priest to justify the use of the nave as a mart or bazaar, save on special or urgent occasions. Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln (d. A.D. 1253), expressly forbade markets to be held in sacred places (*ne in locis sacris habeantur mercata*)[2]. Frequently, the habit, after having been denounced, crept in again unawares. In one village, pleading necessity or stress of weather, and, in another, advancing no plea whatever, hucksters coming to the parish wake or the annual fair would boldly set up their stalls for the sale of victuals within the church[3]. And what was done without let or hindrance in the village was contrived craftily in the city. In old St Paul's, and other cathedrals, stands were erected for special occasions, and were afterwards allowed to remain as centres of bargaining[4]. When driven out of the nave, the dealers could still find a harbour in the porch. The York Fabric Rolls record the fact that pedlars sold their wares in the porch of Riccal church

[1] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 180. [2] Quoted by Addy, *op. cit.* p. 179 and note.

[3] J. C. Cox, in *Curious Church Customs*, p. 1.

[4] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* pp. 344–5. Cf. Barnabe Googe, *Popish Kingdome*, 1570, translated from the Latin of Naogeorgus, Bk IV. ll. 789–92.

(A.D. 1510)[1]. Even the Reformation did not bring these customs to an end. Barnabe Googe's *Popish Kingdome* (1570)—a translation, or adaptation, of the Latin work of Thomas Naogeorgus (Kirchmayer), contains, among other complaints, a bitter lament over the sale of "carpes and pykes and mullets fat," in the church on St Ulrick's Day (July 4th). Both Googe and Naogeorgus wrote as strong Protestants, hence there is a possibility that their pictures are too highly coloured. But it is more likely that they branded as irreligious what was an acknowledged custom. Whether they exaggerated the evil or not, their statements are supported by another Protestant, William Harrison, who wrote only a few years later (A.D. 1577). Harrison's doleful story runs thus: "But as the number of churches increased, so the repair of the faithful unto the cathedrals did diminish, whereby they now become, especially in their nether parts, rather markets and shops for merchandise than solemn places of prayer, whereunto they were first erected[2]." In Norwich, he tells us, the church was turned into a barn, while the people, himself among them, heard service further off, on a green. There, a bell was suspended from an oak, for want of a steeple. "But now," says he, "I understand that the oke likewise is gone[3]." Like Googe, Harrison was such a strenuous Reformer, that he ignored the antiquity of some of the customs which he condemned. Had he been able to take a detached view, he would have seen that the excesses which he witnessed had not sprung up in his day, but that they were extravagances arising from the abuse of a once recognized practice. The Mediaeval citizen, who sauntered into the church to cross himself and to utter a momentary prayer, might often be tempted to stay a full hour to converse with his fellows. The church was a hall for social intercourse, a comfortable shelter for the poor. It was a museum of sculpture and painting, an academy of music. But, running through all these arrangements, there was a current of salutary religious influence. To judge the

[1] *Fabric Rolls of York Minster* (Surtees Soc. XXXV. 1859), p. 271.

[2] W. Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, ed. Lothrop Withington, N. D., p. 65. The first edition of Harrison's work was published in 1577.

[3] W. Harrison, *op. cit.* p. xxiii.

Mediaeval condition of affairs by the standard of the eighteenth, or the early nineteenth century, as one might be hastily led to do, would be a grievous error. The broken windows, once "richly dight," the defaced carvings, the bare, whitewashed walls and the concealed fresco, the demolished rood-loft, the font out of position, the memorial brass at the back of the kitchen fireplace, the registers torn up by the village shopkeeper—these are features which do not belong to the period when the nave, perchance, was used as a storehouse and a market. Such treatment was left to a generation of which eye-witnesses can still speak. We must discriminate between the theoretical principle that all secular matters are bound up in religion, and the lukewarmness which engenders sheer indifference to desecration. If we learn to make this distinction, we shall put a different construction on such queer survivals as the distribution of doles and charities in church, or the scrambling for loaves in the churchyard. They are not acts of wanton irreverence; commendable or not, they are genuine relics of the older legitimate tradition.

From the sale of commodities in the nave we pass to the question of guilds and festivals. The English guilds, which once played an important part in Church history, largely owed their origin, if Dr F. A. Gasquet be correct, to the revival of the religious spirit after the desolating effects of the Black Death in A.D. 1348 and 1349. It will be remembered that the bells of Newcastle summoned the members of the local guild to church three times annually (p. 131 *supra*). These guilds or brotherhoods were in the habit of holding feasts and banquets. For example, the churchwardens' accounts for the village of Chagford, Devon (A.D. 1550–99), show that a society known as the "Young Men's Wardens" were responsible for getting up the "Church-ales." These "Ales" we shall describe in a moment. At South Tawton, in the same county, the "St George's Wardens" undertook the duty[1]. Frequently, the entertainments would be provided in the parsonage-house (Figs. 45, 46), or the church-house

[1] E. Lega-Weekes, in *Notes and Queries*, 1910, 11th Ser., I. p. 346. Concerning Guilds, see E. L. Cutts, *Parish Priests and their People in the Middle Ages of England*, 1898, pp. 473–85.

(Fig. 47), the latter of which was sometimes actually called a guild-hall[1]. The church-house was essentially a parish room, built and maintained by the community, under the direction of the churchwardens. It was built in the architectural style of the period. Unlike the parsonage-house, it was not a place of residence for the clergy. Brand has shown that barns were also used—presumably the large tithe-barns, where

FIG. 45. Priests', or Clergy house, Alfriston, Sussex. Fourteenth century. It consists of a central hall (23 ft × 17 ft), at each end of which are two rooms, one above the other. The framework of the house is of oak, the intervening spaces being filled with wattle and daub. The hall has an open-timbered roof, with king-posts and cambered tie beams. It contains a hooded fireplace. There are several original windows. (See *Vict. Hist. of Sussex*, II. p. 384.) The old elm tree, partly visible on the right, is of unusual size for the species, having a girth of 24 feet at a height of 3 feet from the ground.

these existed. There is reason to believe, however, that the church itself was sometimes the guest-house on these occasions. Certainly this was often the case with the "Ales" proper, to which we must now very briefly allude. The Church-ale, or

[1] A. Jessopp, *Before the Great Pillage*, 1901, pp. 29–31. Parsonage houses are described by E. L. Cutts, *op. cit.* pp. 149–163.

Whitsun-ale, was a kind of parochial festivity in which the churchwardens usually, though, as just noticed, not always, took the initiative. Subscriptions were invited, and, with the money obtained, large quantities of malt were bought. Contributions in kind, such as eggs and meat, were also accepted. The malt was brewed, and the liquor broached, either in the church-house,

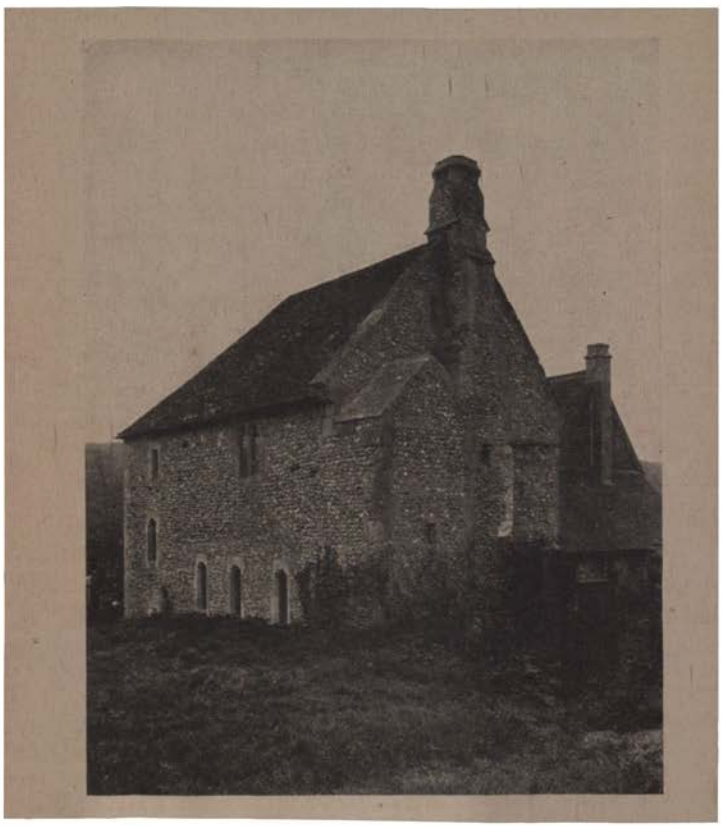

FIG. 46. Clergy, or Parsonage house, West Dean, Sussex (c. A.D. 1280). View from North end. The building, which is of stone, consists of a hall (30 ft × 15 ft internal measurement), with a story above. The walls are 2 ft 6 in. in thickness. The solar, or loft, is approached by a stone newel staircase, built in the buttress-like projection, which is seen at the North-East angle. The chimney is elaborately constructed. In the east wall a double-lighted window, with trefoiled heads, is visible. (For fuller description, see *Vict. Hist. of Sussex*, II. p. 383; A. Hussey, *Churches of Kent, Sussex, and Surrey*, 1852, p. 219; *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.* III. pp. 13–22.)

or as Philip Stubbs (or Stubbes), the Puritan, asserts, in the sacred building itself[1]. The church-house was doubtless a familiar institution in Elizabethan England. Examples are on record where the leases of such houses expressly stipulate that they should be available for making "Quarter ales" or Church-ales. Such buildings contained all the spits, crocks, and utensils

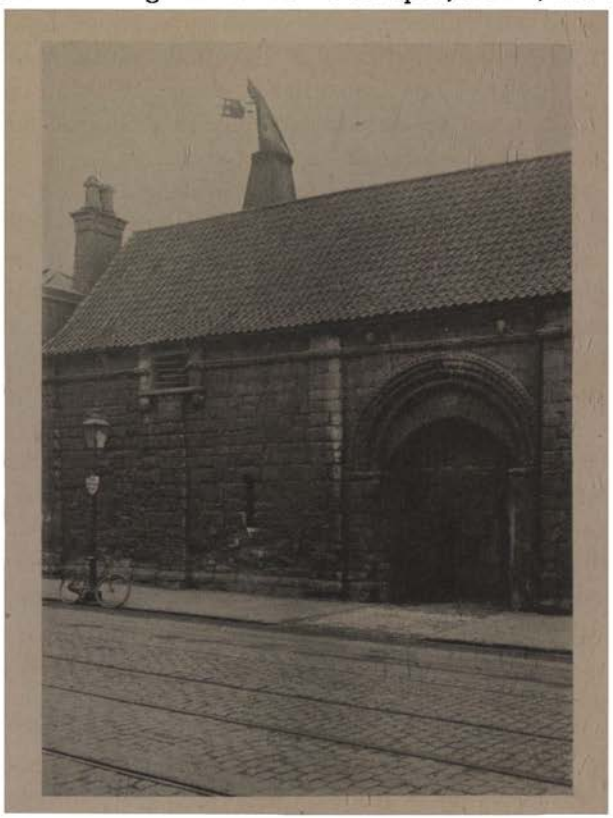

FIG. 47. Church House, or St Mary's Guild Hall, popularly known as John of Gaunt's Stables, Lincoln. 12th century. Principal front, showing the Transitional Norman entrance doorway, with tooth ornament in a shallow moulding. Above is a rich cornice of sculptured foliage. The buttresses are flat, and there is a Norman loop in the lower story. Within is an ancient fireplace. The roof is modern.

[1] P. Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses in England*, 1583, ed. F. J. Furnivall, 1877–9, pp. 150–2. J. Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, ed. Sir H. Ellis, 1843, I. pp. 276–284.

necessary for preparing the banquet[1]. In the tower of Frensham church, Surrey, there is preserved a large cauldron of beaten copper, locally known as "Mother Ludlam's Kettle." This vessel has doubtless played its part in many a parish feast.

Though the church-house, or, alternatively, the tithe-barn, was, after the Reformation, generally the scene of the revels, custom was not uniform, as frequent injunctions against the holding of drinking-parties and banquets within the church sufficiently testify. The transition from church to church-house was made, it would appear, in deference to Puritan opinion, but the populace was somewhat tenacious of the old habit. One great objection to the Church-ales lay in the rude and boisterous sports with which they were associated. However slight might be the murmur against quoits, bowls, or shooting at the butts, it is plain that the baiting of bulls, bears, or badgers, the loud, and possibly lewd folk-songs, the noisy dancing parties, would pass the bounds of decency and decorum, and cry out for suppression. The feast lasted a day or two, and occasionally longer. The profits of the merrymaking formed a kind of voluntary church-rate, and were devoted to church-restoration, or the purchase of service books and vessels. It has been pertinently suggested that some of the grotesque corbel heads, so frequently found in churches, may mark the restorations which were made out of the profits of Church-ales. Nothing but a village feast, it is supposed, could have furnished the sculptor with models to enable him to represent so well gluttony and drunkenness. The theory is rather harsh, but it may contain a measure of truth.

There were other Ales besides the one just described. The Bid-ale was a co-operative banquet, devised to aid some unfortunate or impoverished parishioner. The Clerk-ale was intended to provide, or to increase, the salary of the parish clerk. There were also Lamb-ales, Bride-ales, Scot-ales, and others. In fact, occasions seem actually to have been sought for holding these holy-ales, which were of a nature at once

[1] F. A. Gasquet, *Par. Life in Mediaeval England*, pp. 233–7. J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. pp. 354–5. J. Brand, *op. cit.* I. p. 282. *Athenaeum*, 17 Sept. 1910, p. 333.

social and benevolent[1]. Needless to say, there were two sides to this, as to every question. Regrettable, even disgraceful, though the proceedings might oftentimes become, we are yet compelled to consider the original and normal conditions. The relief of the poor has been mentioned. Tyack states that, in the year 1651, so many as seventy-two parish priests of Somersetshire certified that not only were the congregations larger during a Church-ale—not a surprising fact—but that "the service of God was more solemnly performed[2]." If such opinions were held generally—and, so far as they were held at all by the clergy, they would be reciprocated by laymen—one cannot marvel at the action of the villagers of Clungunford, Shropshire, who in 1637 complained to Archbishop Laud about the discontinuance of the Easter feast. For centuries the poor and aged folk had been regaled with bread, cheese, and beer, after evensong on Easter Sunday. Fifty years previous to the presentation of the petition, in accordance with the wishes of the ruling Archbishop, the feast had been transferred from the church to the parsonage; but now it was abandoned altogether. Laud's decision ran thus: "I shall not go about to break this custom so it be done in the parsonage house, in a neighbourly and decent way." Similar cases might be brought forward to show that the tradition of feasting in church died hard[3].

We leave the tempting subject of church-ales, and, still considering the motives which led to the provision of such ample space within the sacred walls, we must take a glimpse of church-plays. The connection between the church and the drama has been partially dealt with by numerous writers, and exhaustively by Mr E. K. Chambers, in his *Mediaeval Stage*. On the character of the church plays we cannot dwell at length, nor is this necessary, for the subject has interested most antiquaries, and descriptions are to be found in many treatises. A brief enumeration, however, is desirable. There was the Passion Play at Easter, when a solemn representation of the burial and

[1] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. pp. 351–7. *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 151–2. *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, pp. 71–74.

[2] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 73.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 117–8.

Resurrection of the Saviour was enacted at the altar, or beneath a specially constructed "sepulchre." There was the Nativity play at Christmas, when clergy, choristers, and other folk, represented the scenes connected with the manger-birth[1]. But the best known performances were the Miracle Plays. At first, these were acted within the church walls, but, at a later date, the players were driven into the church-yard. The popularity of these plays became so great that the church could not accommodate the audience, and this consideration, rather than clerical disfavour, probably turned the scale. Indeed, when the drama had passed out of the hands of the clergy and choir, and had become appropriated by trade guilds or strolling players, when, too—it must be said—the plays had become tinged with ribaldry and profanity, the authorities seemed to have regretted the expulsion. Within the church, a certain degree of oversight was always exercised; on the village green, the censorship was lax and intermittent. Occasionally, as Dr J. C. Cox asserts, the wandering troops were still allowed to use the churches[2]. An attempt was made to recover lost ground, and miracle plays were declared sinful if played on the roads or greens[3]. We must shortly return to this phase of the question, but meanwhile let us recapitulate Mr Chambers's theory of the development of the religious drama.

Mr Chambers, after tracing the steady evolution of religious plays, concludes that the Church gradually came to make the appeal to the mimetic instinct in mankind by means of the introduction of dramatic elements into its liturgy[4]. From the fourth century, at least, the Mass was the central object of ritual, and it was from this service, little by little, that the

[1] A. W. Pollard, *Eng. Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes*, 4th edition, 1904, pp. xiv, xvii. Mr Pollard reproduces many of the old plays, e.g. "Castell of Perseverance," "Everyman," etc. K. L. Bates, *The Eng. Religious Drama*, 1893, pp. 8–10. J. J. Jusserand, *Literary Hist. of the Eng. People*, 1909, III. chap. i. J. C. Cox, in *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 16–18.

[2] J. C. Cox, in *Curious Church Customs*, p. 17.

[3] E. Dale, *National Life and Char. in the Mirror of Eng. Literature*, 1907, pp. 249–50.

[4] E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, 1903, II. p. vi (of preface), and "Book 3" of this volume especially.

dramatic dialogues and representations were derived and elaborated. Originally a mere symbol of a commemorative kind, the Mass became a repetition of the initial sacrifice, invested with a dramatic character[1]. Thus the ritual play proper was evolved, and out of this, in later times, sprang the familiar miracle play[2].

We may infer, then, that there was a valid reason why the religious plays should be performed in hallowed buildings. The question arises, whether this was the usual practice, or an exceptional liberty. No less an authority than Canon Jessopp, that tireless and conscientious elucidator of ancient documents, is of opinion that the use of churches for setting forth miracle plays was rare. He cites an instance where twenty-seven parishes contributed to the expenses of one of these spectacles. From this circumstance, he concludes that there must have been a "monster performance," and that the onlookers could not well have been sheltered within the church[3]. Perhaps the case brought forward itself represents the exception, or, at any rate, belongs to the era when plays had been driven out into the churchyard. And it is extremely probable, I think, that some of the old tithe-barns (Figs. 43, 44, pp. 171–2 *supra*), when almost, or quite empty, would be very serviceable as theatres. Against the verdict of Canon Jessopp—a verdict which cannot be airily dismissed—we have to set undeniable facts. Mr Chambers affirms that for a long time the church proved sufficient for the accommodation of the folk who came to watch the plays. The performances spread, perhaps by degrees, from the choir to the nave. "The *domus*, *loca*, or *sedes* [were] set at intervals against the pillars while the people crowded to watch in the side aisles." It was during the twelfth century that the players first sought ampler room outside the church[4]. The ousting of the performance was a gradual process. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the liturgical play was slow in severing its intimate connection with the church. From the churchyard it passed to the church gate, and thence to the market-place, or to

[1] E. K. Chambers, *op. cit.* II. pp. 3 et seqq.

[2] *Ibid.* II. p. 79.

[3] *Before the Pillage*, pp. 49–50.

[4] E. K. Chambers, *op. cit.* II. p. 79; K. L. Bates, *op. cit.* pp. 11–17.

some croft or field. While all these changes were being made, the village fair, as a popular institution, was becoming well established, and the outdoor play was heartily welcomed by the holiday-makers[1].

The evidence produced by Mr Chambers shows, therefore, that convenience, and not clerical censure, was the prime cause at work in removing the players from the churches. The demand for ejection was afterwards reinforced by the Reformers, but by that time the result was being otherwise brought about. It now becomes still more intelligible why plays on the green were, at one period, actually denounced. The natural home of the play was the church, and in the church it lingered. "Quite apart from the survival of ritual plays proper, the miracle play, even at the moment of its extinction, had not always and everywhere been excluded from the church itself[2]." Mr Chambers gives numerous examples, and avers that the last of all the village plays—he is evidently referring to annual institutions—that of Hascombe, Surrey, in 1539, "was at, but perhaps not in, the church[3]." A few years later, Bonner forbade the presentation of plays either in the church or churchyard[4]. This edict does not seem to have been fully obeyed, for Dr J. C. Cox declares that both in pre-Reformation and post-Reformation times the authorities occasionally suffered secular country dramas and rude historic scenes to be represented in the nave of the church[5]. Nor is this all; in the sixteenth century Bishop John Bale endeavoured to counteract the miracle plays by Protestant dramas, conceived in much the same style as the genuine works (A.D. 1538, etc.). The unintentional hardihood of some of Bale's impersonations is said to have bordered on blasphemy. This is one view of the matter; allowance must be made for an important fact, noted by Mr A. W. Pollard, namely, that Bale wrote as an antiquary, not as a controversialist[6].

Lest anyone should demur to this narrative of the miracle

[1] *Ibid.* II. pp. 134–5. K. L. Bates, *op. cit.* pp. 33–34.

[2] *Ibid.* II. p. 134.

[3] *Ibid.* II. p. 134.

[4] S. O. Addy, *op. cit.* p. 181.

[5] *Curious Church Customs*, p. 17.

[6] J. C. Jeaffreson, *op. cit.* I. pp. 346–7. A. W. Pollard, *op. cit.* p. lvii. See account of Bale's life in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

play, a glance at certain customs, either pagan or semi-pagan in their origin, may help to dispel all suspicion of unfairness. The old morris-dances (Fig. 48), which were associated with the church, were occasionally, as at Whitsuntide, performed within the nave. The wardens were not infrequently entrusted with the "properties" necessary for the performance of the dances. The earlier churchwardens' accounts contain abundant references

FIG. 48. Morris dancers, from 14th century MS. in the Bodleian Library (Strutt).

to the costumes of the dancers and mummers. The accounts of St Mary's, Reading, contain entries of this kind so late as A.D. 1556–7[1]. We may perhaps find the immediate exemplars of some of these dances in the fandango of the Moors, especially if, as philologists tell us, the word "morris" is connected with the name of this race[2]. The ultimate origin of the custom,

[1] *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 10–12. The question of morris-dancers is discussed at length by J. Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, I. pp. 247–252, etc.

[2] *New Oxford Dict.*, under "Morris."

however, lies deeper, and goes back to the turn-over from heathenism. Some of the dances are as essentially British as any legacies which antiquity has bequeathed to us. One example, known as "Bean-setting," is conjectured to be derived from a primitive ceremonial dance which was once performed in the springtime, when the crops were sown. In fact, dancing, and the revels with which it was accompanied, gave great trouble to the Early Fathers, who had much difficulty in safeguarding the precincts of the church from such intrusions[1]. So recently as the seventeenth century, a writer quoted by Mr Chambers could assert that, in his lifetime, he had seen clergy and singing boys dancing at Easter in the churches of Paris. Here, surely, was a vestige of paganism. And, although one cannot produce apposite parallels from Britain, there are astounding modern survivals of this kind reported from Continental churches, for example, at Seville, and at Echternach, in Luxembourg[2]. The Whit-Tuesday dancing procession at Echternach still takes place annually and attracts a huge crowd of pilgrims. The dancing is a kind of rhythmical leap, and is performed on the way from the Abbey church to the grave of St Willibrord, and then back again. Dancing in churches at Christmas—a different matter from dancing at Easter—was not unknown in England itself in the seventeenth century. John Aubrey says that, in his day, Yorkshire folk danced in the churches at Christmas-tide, singing or crying, "Yole, Yole, Yole[3]!" Philip Stubbes, in 1583, had denounced bitterly the "Devil's dances" in church. Mention should not be omitted also of the horn dancers of Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire, whose reindeer antlers, dresses, and other properties are preserved in the parish church. There are records of horn-dancing from other places, but the Abbots Bromley performance, which is still continued annually, is most instructive, because it was carefully investigated by Dr J. C. Cox about a dozen years ago. Dr Cox then

[1] J. M. Robertson, *Christianity and Paganism*, 1900, ch. xiv. (numerous authorities given). E. K. Chambers, *op. cit.* I. pp. 161–2.

[2] E. K. Chambers, *op. cit.* I. p. 163.

[3] J. Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (1686–7), ed. J. Britten, 1881, p. 5; cf. p. 213. Cf. P. Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, pp. 146–8.

found persons living who could recollect the accompanying music being played in the church porch, while the dancers executed their steps in the churchyard. Moreover, this authority credits the tradition that, in former times, the dance, which was a preliminary to making the round of the parish, was performed in the church[1].

Having considered the use of the nave for purposes of trade and amusement, we must now notice what really seems to have been an unusual occurrence—the confinement of animals within the church. The custom was uncommon, because it never seems to have been actually sanctioned. And little wonder; decency alone demanded some limitation of such ignoble uses. In permitting the building to be employed for secular purposes, there was always a danger of licence, yet it must be said that notorious laxity seems to have usually brought a reprimand. But the practice alluded to, like a troublesome weed, refused to be extirpated. Von Hefele relates that, at the Quinsext, or Trullan Synod, held in the Imperial Palace at Constantinople in A.D. 692, the following decree was passed: "No cattle may be driven into the church, except in the greatest need, if a stranger has no shelter and his animals would otherwise perish[2]." One wonders whether a certain Essex vicar, who, in A.D. 1550, was reported for allowing sheep to be folded in the church, had ever heard of this decree. At all events, he pleaded that his action was taken "for grete and extreme necessitie sake, and not in anie contempt." He was able to prove that there had been a heavy and unexpected fall of snow, and that the animals were placed in the church to save their lives. After the storm had abated, the sheep had been removed, and the church cleaned. The offender did not altogether escape punishment, even after this plea, for he was ordered to do penance and to distribute alms to the poor of the parish[3]. The vicar might have found a still wider loophole provided by an injunction belonging to the reign of the English king Edgar. This

[1] *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 13–14. Cf. T. S. Knowlson, *Origins of Pop. Superstitions and Customs*, 1910, pp. 205–7.

[2] C. J. Von Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils of the Church*, 1896, v. pp. 234–5.

[3] E. Stone, *God's Acre: or Histor. Notices relating to Churchyards*, 1858, pp. 99—100.

injunction not only specifically forbids eating, drinking, and indecorous behaviour within the church, but bans the entrance of dogs, or of more pigs than could be kept under control. The position is most remarkable, though, indeed, the expression used seems equivocal, "*Neque intra ecclesiae sepem canis aliquis veniat, neque porcorum plures quam quis regere possit*[1]." If we assume that all churchyards were actually enclosed at this period, and if we allow the wider interpretation of "*ecclesiae sepem*," as meaning the whole enclosure of church and churchyard, the decree still appears inferentially to permit a considerable latitude of custom. That, in periods of general looseness of discipline, animals were allowed to graze in the churchyard, is well known to most readers. In the same year that the Essex clergyman was summoned for folding sheep in the church, complaint was made, concerning a churchyard in the Archdeaconry of Colchester, that "hogges do wrote up graves, and besse (= cattle) lie in the porch"; while a parish priest was "sworn to penance" for putting his horse in the churchyard[2]. But the practice could not be stopped. Essex had an unenviable reputation in this respect, for Peter Kalm, in 1748, notes that in this county and in the part of Kent around Gravesend and Rochester, grazing the churchyard was customary. Horses, pigs, and donkeys, but especially horses, were pastured among the graves. The churchyard was also kept as a meadow for hay. Let the acts be reprobated to the uttermost, they could not be entirely brought to an end. During a tithe dispute between a Derbyshire prior and the parochial clergy, lambs and wool were placed in a church, and a free fight ensued[3]. This was before the Reformation, but if we turn to such a work as Mackarness's edition of *Prideaux's Churchwarden's Guide* (1895), we find a curious hesitancy in pronouncing definitely on a somewhat kindred matter. Should the parson "merely turn a horse or a few sheep

[1] D. Wilkins, *Leges Anglo-Saxonicae*, 1781, p. 24. Cf. E. L. Cutts, *op. cit.* p. 69.

[2] E. Stone, *op. cit.* pp. 98–9. For detailed instances of laxity in Essex, see J. C. Cox and J. H. Round, *Vict. Hist. of Essex*, 1907, II. pp. 41 et seqq. Cf. P. Kalm, *Account of his Visit to England* (1748), trans. J. Lucas, 1892, p. 42. In A.D. 1603, the vicar of Lydden, Kent, built a stable in the churchyard (*Home Counties Magazine*, 1911, XIII. p. 15).

[3] W. H. Beckett, *The Eng. Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 1890, p. 34.

into the churchyard to pasture therein," the churchwardens may not feel called upon to interfere. But if he lets loose animals which turn up the soil, and profane the graves, or if, again, he converts the church-porch into a stable for his horse, he may rightly be censured[1]. The mounting-blocks already mentioned (p. 157 *supra*) show that these maxims must, in former times, have been indifferently followed in some parishes.

Throughout the Middle Ages, there was prevalent another custom which is repugnant to modern ideas. This was the keeping of doves in or near churches. Most frequently, it is true, a separate structure seems to have been built to accommodate the birds, as at Garway, Herefordshire. The Garway dovecot, a fourteenth century building, would house 600 birds. Sometimes, as we have seen at Gumfreston (p. 115 *supra*), a portion of the tower was utilized as a pigeon loft, while again, as at Elkstone, Gloucestershire, a chamber was built over the chancel[2]. Incidentally, we may notice that the privilege of building a columbarium, or culver-house, as it was called, was confined to the lord of the manor, the rector, the heads of monastic houses, and freeholders. The existence of a culver-house is usually deemed a sign of Norman influence. The dovecot of Berwick, Sussex, shown in the illustration (Fig. 49), is doubtless several centuries old. A few Sussex culver-houses probably go back to the twelfth or thirteenth century, but such examples are generally in ruins. The Berwick dovecot can be traced back at least to the year 1622, when it was rented from the parson for five pounds a year.

Most persons are familiar with the old box pew, in which the territorial family used to sit during service. Frequently these apartments—for they really deserved this name—contained a fireplace. Pre-Reformation fireplaces are rare in churches, but in the Norbury chapel, or chantry, at Stoke D'Abernon, Surrey, there is a specimen dating c. A.D. 1490. During the worst days of the large private pews, which were often partially screened from the body of the church, a special compartment

[1] *Prideaux's Churchwarden's Guide*, ed. F. C. Mackarness, 1895, p. 321.

[2] *Antiquary*, 1899, xxxv. p. 361. Cf. *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., II. pp. 49–50. Cf. pp. 95–6.

was sometimes provided for the dogs of the local squire. Examples of these recesses could be seen at Aveley, Essex, and Northorpe, Lincolnshire, not much more than a century back[1]. At Northorpe, the dogs' pew was just within the chancel arch.

FIG. 49. Ancient dovecot, Berwick Court, Sussex. These buildings are usually attached to the territorial house of the village. Sussex has many examples; some are much older than the specimen figured, but they are usually not so well preserved. The whole of the interior of the Berwick dovecot is fitted up for the birds. (See description in *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.* VI. pp. 232–3.)

Nevertheless, not everyone was permitted to take his dog to church. The dog-whipper was a recognized officer in many churches, and it is common to find, in church accounts, entries

[1] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, pp. 109–110. For a bibliography of this subject, see *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XII. pp. 342–3. Hawks were also taken to church in the days when hawking was popular.

relating to the payment of this functionary[1]. In some cases the office was endowed, and the salary, though small, was fixed. His pew was sometimes marked with the words "The dog-whipper." The dogs kept out of the building were doubtless those belonging to farmers and shepherds. Custom was not uniform, but, as a rule, the minister does not seem to have raised any objection to quiet animals. Some of the contrivances employed by the dog-whipper, or "dog-noper" (*noper*, *knauper* = striker), are peculiar. Generally, the weapon was a thick stick, to which was attached a stout lash or thong, but in some churches instruments known as dog-tongs (Fig. 41, p. 169 *supra*) were used. These weapons were especially necessary when shepherd dogs flew at each other's throats. Such fights often led to local disputes, and the incumbent then felt bound to interfere.

There are records which are more distasteful even than those which tell of taking dogs to church. When we read of card-playing and cock-fighting in church, we are really compelled to regard these as acts of wanton impiety which marked a period of deadness in religion. The records are certainly sporadic. Again, there is good reason to believe the tradition, met with at Chislehurst and elsewhere, that parishioners left the house of prayer and walked across the green to the cockpit. At Hayes, in Middlesex, it is said that the uncouth and brutal custom of throwing at cocks in the churchyard was kept up so late as A.D. 1754[2].

It has been a difficult feat to disentangle the secular use of the nave from that of the churchyard. The reason is simple: the play of social and administrative forces was rarely quite balanced and continuously uniform for any considerable length of time. Alternately, the church and the graveyard were utilized for parochial purposes, as ecclesiastical power and public opinion rose and fell. In addition, before the final severance was made, there was a period when assemblies were allowed to be held in the churchyard, on sufferance only. We have seen that, when fairs and markets were impending, the clergy sometimes permitted the church to be used as a warehouse or exchange.

[1] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, pp. 114, 115.

[2] W. Jerrold, *Highways and Byways of Middlesex*, 1909, p. 213.

Contemporaneously with, as well as subsequently to, this use of the church, we find the traders being pushed into the churchyard, and thence to the village green, or a pasture field.

The village fair was commonly held on the day which was dedicated to the patron saint of the church. This coincidence often proves helpful to the investigator, for when the original dedication of a church has been lost, it may perhaps be recovered by noticing the date of the fair, which gives the anniversary of the saint[1]. (The saint's day and the dedication festival are not now always coincident, but the divergence may not be a primitive feature.) The agreement of dates doubtless takes us back to the days when Christianity had not yet become supreme, and when the leaders took advantage of any casual support, such as would be obtained by holding the patronal festival on a day devoted to the affairs of popular assemblies or the pleasures of a general holiday. Naturally, there long remained a close connection between the feast and the church fabric which was the centre of much of the activity of the community. When fairs, in the strict sense, began to be held, the old date of the feast would still be retained. For many a century, too, no serious attempt was made to deprive the merry-makers of the right to meet within the sacred enclosure. Farmers came to buy or sell stock, labourers stood for hire, merchants arrived from distant towns to trade in wool or grain, pedlars spread their wares on the tombstones in the churchyard, while the populace gave itself over to pastime and refreshment.

Intermittently, murmurs were heard respecting these doings. Thus, in a presentment (A.D. 1416) from St Michael-le-Belfry, in the city of York, complaint is made of the tumult and clamour caused by the traders. On Sundays and holidays there was "a common market of vendibles in the churchyard." All kinds of goods were exposed for sale (*diversa res et bona ac cirpi* [= rushes] *vendicioni ibidem exponuntur*); while horses stood over the dead and defiled the graves[2]. Especially when a cathedral or church possessed some famous shrine or relic, as at

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 362.

[2] *Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, p. 248. See also E. L. Cutts, *op. cit.* pp. 205, 316–7.

Canterbury, Walsingham, and Glastonbury, pilgrims and traders met on common ground. For a long time it was customary, at St Audrey's fair, to erect booths in Ely Cathedral, for the sale of laces made of thin silk[1]. Pilgrims from afar would naturally require refreshment at the end of their journey, and the victuallers of the cities were always ready to meet the demand. But, unfortunately, to the legitimate buying and selling of food and drink, was appended the boisterousness of minstrels, actors, and jugglers[2].

Perhaps the most important legislation against churchyard commerce is contained in the Statute of Winchester, A.D. 1285 (13 Edw. I., c. 6), which forbade the holding of fairs and markets in churchyards[3]. The act, however, proved ineffectual, for, in A.D. 1368, Archbishop Simon Langham found it necessary to issue a mandate against Sunday markets in the Isle of Sheppey, where the traders approached so near the church as to interrupt the celebration of Mass. Later infractions have already been noticed (p. 174 *supra*), so that the story may be cut short by citing such cases of survival as those of All Saints, Northampton, and Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Yorkshire, where, until modern times, fairs were held in the churchyards[4]. The churchyard at Laughton was of enormous size, and in this respect, at least, was well adapted for its purpose.

I have suggested that the coincidence of fair day and saint's day is a vestige of a very early compromise, when the dedication festival was substituted for heathen ceremonial. The idea may be pursued in two other directions. First, we might observe how many fairs, or feasts, are held at seasons which are known to correspond to pagan festivals, for example, Whitsuntide and midsummer. It would then be seen to what extent the dedication periods were in harmony with those of festivals, either as regards actual coincidence of dates, or preliminary warnings.

Sir Norman Lockyer and the Rev. J. Griffith have called attention to the large number of fairs which are held on the

[1] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 116.
[2] J. Nicholson, in *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 149–50.
[3] *Statutes of the Realm*, 1810, I. p. 98.
[4] G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 274.

festival, or quarter days, of the "May Year." These writers consider that such fairs are the representatives of meetings summoned when fires were lighted and Gorsedds or Gorseddau (see p. 98 *supra*) were erected. The fairs and the churches together "mark for us the *loci* of the original circle-worship, and the fact that we are dealing with the May Year and *not* the solstice shows that we have to do with a very high antiquity." Our fairs, according to this view, represent "thousands of British Gorsedds, the pedigrees of which are as unimpeachable as that of the Welsh institution[1]." To the present writer, this theory seems to go much beyond the recorded facts, but time and further inquiry may tell.

The second mode of research is to ascertain with what frequency the village fairs are, or were, kept near ancient monuments or earthworks. Thus, from time immemorial a sheep fair has been held within the oval camp on the top of Woodbury Hill, near Bere Regis, in Dorset[2]. Mr Thomas Hardy has seized upon this fact, and has deftly worked it into the opening chapter of *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Another earthwork used in this way is that known as Yarnborough, or Yarnbury Castle, in the parish of Hanging Langford, Wiltshire[3]. As these words are being written, one may see bills on the walls in London announcing that special trains are to be run on the day of the fair.

Further corroboration might be given, if it were desirable. Sometimes it is a "blue stone," or a stone pillar, where the concourse of traders gathered. At North Thoresby, in Lincolnshire, the fair was held near a "blue stone" in a meadow near the church called Boundcroft—a significant name.

Intimately connected with the question of fairs held near old earthworks, are the sports which were associated with such places. And, in fact, the fairs and the games are two phases of one subject, while both features, in turn, will illustrate the inability of the early founders of the Church to eliminate pagan customs.

[1] Sir J. N. Lockyer, *Stonehenge*, 2nd edition, 1909, pp. 447–8.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., VIII. p. 250.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 296–7. Cf. Sir G. L. Gomme, *Folklore as an Histor. Science*, 1908, p. 45.

Hence, though for the moment we may appear to wander from our theme, we shall soon see that the matter is not extraneous. When we learn, for instance, that Wiltshire villagers were wont to climb Cley Hill to play a game with balls and sticks within the British earthwork at the summit, and when we hear that this took place on Palm Sunday, we express only mild surprise[1]. When, however, we read of a similar procession of men and maidens, again occurring on Palm Sunday, to the prehistoric camp on the top of St Martin's Hill (or Martinsell), a steep-sided promontory of the chalk range near Marlborough[2], the subject becomes interesting. In discussing the churchyard yew in a later chapter we shall have occasion to recall the Martinsell anniversary (p. 381 *infra*); in the meantime we cast around for other illustrations. A like ceremony was carried out on Palm Sunday by the villagers of Avebury, Wiltshire, who mounted the famous Silbury Hill, there to eat fig cakes and drink sugar and water. The water was procured from the spring below, known as the Swallow Head. Seeing that Palm Sunday bears elsewhere the nickname of "Fig Sunday," and that figs were often eaten at this festival, ecclesiastical writers have supposed that the custom is connected with the Gospel story of the cursing of the barren fig tree. (Figs were not always the fruit eaten; in Wessex and the West of England "fig" also means a raisin.) To the folk-lorist, however, this item will be regarded as adventitious—as an accretion which is due to ideas impressed from without. Were the habit of making these pilgrimages to early earthworks confined to one or two localities, or to one particular festival, this superficial explanation might pass unchallenged. But when we encounter instance after instance, reported from many counties, and connected with various anniversaries, then, though the ceremony be often touched with curious little tinges of local colour, we are compelled to go beyond the accidents, and to seek a common underlying principle. This, indeed, does not seem discoverable by any purely historical process. We are driven back to unconscious folk-memory and immemorial tradition—which rarely endeavour to supply a fully efficient cause—to the dim

[1] M. F. Davies, *Life in an Eng. Village*, 1909, p. 196.

[2] *Folk-Lore*, 1909, XX. p. 81; *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., V. p. 247.

period when, though the practice of raising earthworks was not obsolete, a considerable amount of superstition, and even of ceremonial observance, was already connected with those old monuments. The period referred to roughly covers the first five or six centuries of our era. Behind this transitional stage of superstition lies the prehistoric period, with its own rites and ceremonies, and its own anniversary observances.

Let us now notice one or two cases of hill customs not connected with Palm Sunday. I am informed by Mr W. J. Lucas that it was the custom, forty years ago, for youths and maidens to ascend Chilswell Hill, near Oxford, every Good Friday, to indulge in rude sports and noisy merry-making. So coarse was the play that it was not considered proper for respectable folk to take part in the proceedings. Now one cannot, in any reasonable way, seek the origin of these games in the solemn rites connected with the Christian anniversary. Rather must we look to some ancient spring festival, such as that connected with the Saxon goddess Eostre. It would appear as if the Church in the early period could not, and in the later times would not, altogether abolish the custom. A similar Good Friday procession was formerly made to St Martha's Hill, near Guildford, the church of which was described on p. 131 *supra*. The loud music and the riotous dancing in which the crowd took part were so indecorous that few were found to lament the discontinuance of the custom[1]. There are some curious earth-rings situated to the South of the church, half-hidden by heather, and I have elsewhere suggested that these represent part of a maze[2], within which the sports were once held. If this be correct, there is an indication of a half-hearted attempt on the part of the Church to modify the games, and turn them to a penitential purpose. Some writers have thought that the morris-dancers made use of such circles for their performances. Here, too, we may have a link which binds these outdoor customs to the practice of dancing in church.

We now see that the apparent digression respecting fairs was not altogether irrelevant. There is a thread running through

[1] T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *Brit. Pop. Customs*, 1876, pp. 156–7.

[2] *Folk-Memory*, p. 336.

the whole story. First, we have the practice of making earthworks, which continued in the Early Iron Age, almost to the dawn of documentary history. Within the ramparts, assemblies, whether peaceful or warlike, would often be held, and would be accompanied with some amount of barbaric ritual. Next, we have the period when the true purpose of the camps was becoming forgotten. Myths arose, and though it was considered fitting to hold councils within the old fortifications, for a while all was done with fear and trembling. The earthworks were peopled with giants, fairies, and evil spirits. Time passed, and fairs came into vogue. The dread of giants and "little folk" diminished, and the buyers and sellers would often be conveniently accommodated in, or around, the earthworks. The Early Fathers could not stop the gatherings, or abolish the heathen practice of charms and witchcraft, or quell the tumult of the feast-makers. The difficulties could only be circumvented. When the Christians erected a church on the site once occupied by a pagan temple, they performed a dance to their God as the heathen had previously done to theirs[1]. Occasionally, the Christian teachers built a church near an earthwork. More frequently, they retained the pagan feast-day, but diverted the ceremonies to the honour of the patron saint. The moots were allowed to gather within the church. The healing well and the primitive dance were indulgently accepted. Attracting all functions unto herself, the Church finally allowed the fairs to be held within hallowed ground. It was only when the Mediaeval period was reached that a reconsideration of policy was seriously proposed.

The subject of fairs and markets has claimed so much attention that churchyard sports must be treated rather summarily. So early as A.D. 1225 a provincial synod in Scotland forbade wrestling matches and other sports in churchyards; and the Synod of Exeter, A.D. 1287, similarly prohibited combats, dances, and stage plays. But these isolated ordinances were repeatedly ignored. "Improper and prohibited sports," such as wrestling, football, and handball, involved the transgressors in a penalty of twopence for each offence, at Salton, Yorkshire (A.D.

[1] Alice B. Gomme, *Dict. of Brit. Folk-Lore*, 1898, II. p. 528.

1472)[1]. The rule was infringed, for, nearly half a century later (A.D. 1519), the disobedient had to be threatened with excommunication[2]. So matters went on until the Reformation, and, indeed, down to a much more recent date. Writing in A.D. 1804, Malkin avers that, at feasts and revels, dancing and games at tennis and fives were "universal in [the churchyards of] Radnorshire, and very common in other parts of the Principality[3]." It should be noted, however, that these amusements were commonly permitted only on the North side of the burial-ground, where there were rarely any graves. (Cf. Chap. VIII.) At Stoke St Milborough, Shropshire (p. 95 *supra*), the games were not discontinued until the year 1820[4].

Though this recital of events may cause a shock to devout persons, the severity of the criticism will be relaxed when the conditions are duly appreciated. Once grasp the fact that social convenience reigned almost supreme, and the master key is found. Permeating the whole of the old social customs, though doubtless, to some extent, existing entirely apart from them, there were influences essentially religious and symbolical. On actual examination, however, it is often impossible to make a severance between the practical and the ideal. Take, for example, the widespread custom of preserving natural or semi-natural curiosities, such as fossils and aerolites, in churches. Was this practice based merely on superstition, or on the satisfaction of public curiosity? We are all conversant with the legends which are attached to some of our commoner fossils, and to "thunderbolts" of various kinds[5]. When the Breton peasant, finding a "*pierre de tonnerre*," or "*pierre de foudre*"—really a Neolithic celt or axe of stone—builds it into his chimney to ward off lightning (cf. p. 80 *supra*), he is influenced partly by superstitious fear and partly by credulity. His very superstition is turned to useful account. Similarly, the meteoric stones, such as that which Ambrose Parey (Ambroise Paré) found suspended by an iron chain in the church of Sugolia, on

[1] *Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, p. 255. [2] *Ibid.* p. 270.

[3] B. H. Malkin, *Scenery, Antiquities, and Biography of S. Wales*, 1820, pp. 69–70.

[4] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 69. [5] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 100, 125.

the borders of Hungary, was probably believed to protect the building from the effect of thunderstorms[1]. Grimm tells us of a *donner-stral* (= "a flash of lightning"; thence, evidently, "a thunder-stone," i.e. either an aerolite or a stone celt) which was hung up in Enisheim church, in Alsace-Lorraine. In this connection, it would be well to read the valuable paper written by Professor O. Montelius, entitled "The Sun-God's Axe and Thor's Hammer." He shows that the superstitious respect paid to the stone celt appears in many countries in the most diverse guises[2]. When stone-axes were unearthed by the plough in Norway, they were regarded as gifts from the gods. It is interesting to turn to the Scriptural account of "the image which fell down from Jupiter[3]," and which was said to represent Diana. Some authorities have considered that the "image" was in reality an aerolite, but Professor W. M. Ramsay contends that it was a rude idol. This writer is of opinion that both the Authorized and the Revised Versions are wrong in giving the translation "Jupiter"; the original refers to an object falling "from a clear sky." The tradition of images falling from the heavens was common. The image of Cybele, at Pessinus, about which a story of this kind was told, is believed to have been a "shapeless stone[4]." The reader may feel inclined to ask why, by a similar argument, the image of Diana was not likewise a shapeless stone, especially as ignorant folk everywhere are prone to assert that various objects, such as fossil belemnites and lumps of iron pyrites, have dropped out of the firmament. But is there any authenticated instance where an actual image, rather than a natural stone, has been identified as connected with this superstition?

The more noticeable fossil remains attracted attention at an early date. The Emperor Augustus decorated his villa at Capri with large fossil bones—"Giants' bones." The church was long considered the natural repository for other curious relics. The

[1] A. Parey, *Chirurgical Works*, 1649. The incident is cited in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VI. p. 325, but I have been unable to trace the original passage in T. Johnson's translation of the *Workes*, 1649. (W. J.)

[2] *Folk-Lore*, XXI. 1910, pp. 60–78. Cf. Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, IV. p. 1344.

[3] Acts xix. 35.

[4] Sir W. M. Ramsay, in *Dict. of the Bible*, ed. J. Hastings, 1898, under "Diana of the Ephesians."

tusks of fossil animals were commonly placed in Continental churches during the Mediaeval period. Although there existed a collection of fossils in the museum of the Vatican, and although these had been described—inefficiently, it is true—by Michele Mercati, towards the end of the seventeenth century, yet such relics still found a home in the church. Mercati's manuscript, with its mixture of truth and error, was not, indeed, published by Lancisi until the years A.D. 1717–19, but neither this, nor similar works, made much impression upon the unlettered crowd. Stories soon gathered around the treasured bones or fossils. At the church of Pennant Melangel, in Montgomeryshire, the rib of a mammoth became metamorphosed into a "Giant's rib," as well as into a bone of St Monacella[1]. In the Foljambe Chapel of Chesterfield parish church, the jaw-bone of a whale has become a rib of the Dun Cow of Warwick[2] (cf. p. 485 *infra*). A bone is preserved in the church of St Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol, which, report says, belonged to a cow that once supplied the whole city with milk. Other folk, ruthless destroyers of myths, declare, with more reason, that the bone is that of a whale, and was brought from Newfoundland by Cabot. There are many other bones which claim to belong to this celebrated Dun Cow. Instances of church curiosities of this kind could be greatly extended; space can be found only for one, which happens to be of great interest.

In the church chest of Canewdon, near Rochford, Essex, there is preserved an immense and somewhat unattractive relic which, in all probability, is a portion of a vertebra of a whale (Fig. 50). How the bone came to be deposited in the church, and where it was found, are mysteries. The most plausible surmise is that it was dredged up by fishermen off the coast. Strange to say, the relic, which is known to the villagers as "Canute's knee-bone," is the second which the church has possessed. The predecessor of the present bone long since

[1] R. W. Rees, in *Eccles. Curiosities*, pp. 230–2.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 234. A good summary of the early opinions regarding fossils is given by K. A. von Zittel, *History of Geology and Palaeontology*, trans. M. M. Ogilvie-Gordon, 1901, pp. 10 et seqq. See also G. F. Richardson, *Introduction to Geology*, ed. T. Wright, 1851, ch. ii.

disappeared—no one knows where. There is an entry in the parish register, dated A.D. 1711, which refers to a certain "Ribbe Bone"—a portion of the skeleton of St Christopher. The Rev. C. R. Hardy, vicar of Canewdon, informs me that a later writer alludes to the "knee-cap of a Dane," which was kept locked up in the church chest and shown to visitors. The two bones alluded to can scarcely be identical, and the facts show

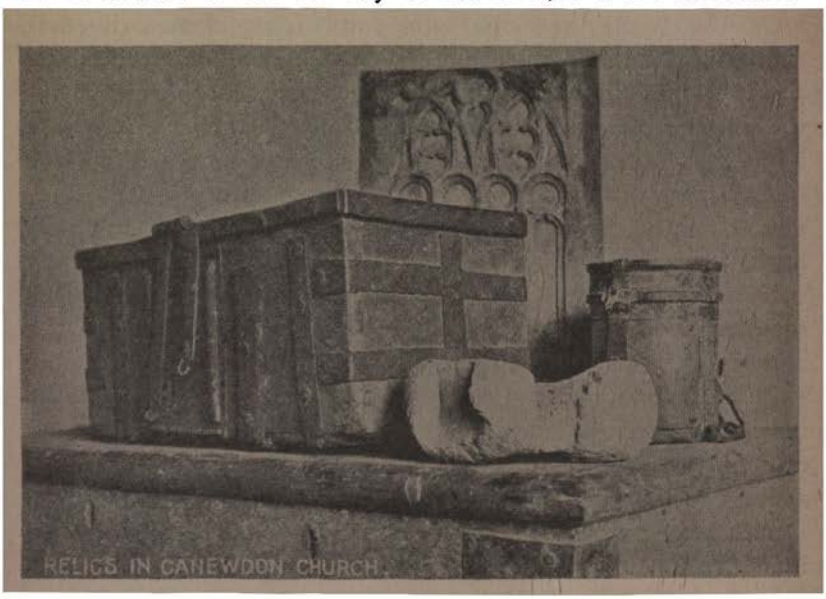

FIG. 50. "Canute's knee-bone," Canewdon church, Essex. The other objects are: (1) an iron-bound church chest; (2) a carved panel (c. A.D. 1410), probably part of a screen; (3) a cylindrical alms box, 8½" high and 12" in circumference, turned out of a solid piece of wood.

how rapidly a secondary myth can arise, when there is, as will at once be shown, a tributary tradition to support it. This tradition asserts that on the hill overlooking the village a battle was fought with the Danes. Professor Freeman, who closely investigated matters on the spot, came to the conclusion that the topographical details harmonized well with the description of Assandun, and that it was here that Canute met Edmund Ironsides in conflict (A.D. 1016). By the way, we notice that Canute's nephew, Sweyn, was presented with the manor of which

Canewdon forms a part. Freeman further considered that the place-name Canewdon may preserve the name of the Danish conqueror[1]. The Rev. E. W. Heygate has also suggested that Canewdon signifies "Cnut's Down[2]." In these days, however, when etymology is based on research work, the conjectures of a past generation must be approached with suspicion. The Domesday spelling Carenduna, occurring only seventy years after the battle, and the later forms Carendun, Cannedon, Canvedon, Canudon, seem practically decisive against the proposed derivation. Title-deeds of the sixteenth century have Canudon; and the parish register of 1636, Canewdon. Mr F. W. Reader, whose reputation as an archaeologist and scientific observer is well-established, found, upon inquiry, that the pronunciation of the village name was Caňewdon, and that it is only in modern times that the accentuation of the second syllable has gained ground. Mr Hardy says that the pronunciations are equally common. This fact also tells somewhat against the popular derivation. On the whole, it seems probable that folk-memory may be fairly sound on the question of the battle, and even of Canute's share therein, but that the suggested etymology is incorrect, and is an afterthought due to the currency of the "knee-bone" myth.

In truth, wherever we meet with these curious legacies of bones, fossils, or other objects, there we also find what Sir Thomas Browne called "fallacious enlargements." The cathedral of St Bertrand-de-Comminges, in the French department of Haute-Garonne, possesses a stuffed crocodile. Legend says that the relic was brought thither by a Crusader, but one may doubt the story. A goose feather, kept in a recess fashioned in a pillar of Pewsey church, Wiltshire, and carefully screened by a little door of glass, was once thought, so the inscription informs us, to be a feather of the wing of the angel Gabriel. At East Wellow, near Romsey, Hampshire, an old flint-lock gun is seen attached to a beam in the chancel, and local tradition has an explanation to offer, though it is probably not the correct one. Those who

[1] E. A. Freeman, *Hist. of the Norman Conquest of England*, 3rd edition, 1877, I. p. 390. See also *Home Counties Magazine*, 1910, XII. p. 184.

[2] E. Stokes and J. H. Round, in *Vict. Hist. of Essex*, II. p. 209, and note.

are fond of such quaint trifles can find other examples[1] of symbolism and superstition. The widespread custom of suspending eggs in churches is symbolical rather than superstitious, though it has given rise to considerable debate. In Spanish churches the eggs chosen are chiefly those of the goose; and they are usually placed near statues[2]. Elsewhere, however, ostrich eggs are in favour, and especially is this the case in Mohammedan mosques, where they are hung from the ceiling. At home we have our Easter or Pasque eggs, with which many customs and much folk-lore are associated. Durandus, ever-ready to supply some strained and mystical interpretation, will have it that the ostrich eggs denote the "cherishing mercy of God[3]." Present-day writers, with a greater knowledge of comparative customs, recognize in the "world-egg" the great emblem of life, resurrection, and restoration[4]. But into this spacious field we must not now enter.

Some of the objects bequeathed to the twentieth century are not quite so free from superstition as is the ostrich egg. At Laniscat, Pont Croix, Kerdreuff, and one or two other places in Brittany, there may still be seen, in the church, "wheels of fortune." These are large wheels with spokes; to the outside of the rim bells are attached. As the wheel is turned, the bells ring. There are boxes for the reception of money, and when the sufferer from some malady has placed his money in the box, he pulls the rope to make the bells clang. These wheels, as Mr Baring-Gould and others have pointed out, have a long pedigree[5]. They go back, first to the Roman worship of the goddess Fortuna, and finally, perhaps, to sun-worship. Among the Gaulish tribes, the wheel represented the protection afforded by the solar deity; in tombs, it was perhaps emblematic of

[1] The stained shirt and other relics of Charles I. were formerly kept in the parish church of Ashburnham, Sussex, and were resorted to for the cure of the "king's evil" so recently as A.D. 1860.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., VI. p. 206.

[3] W. Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, ed. J. M. Neale and B. Webb, 1843, pp. 79–80.

[4] G. Allen, *Evolution of the Idea of God*, R. P. A. reprint, 1903, p. 149.

[5] S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Brittany*, 1901, pp. 198–9; F. M. Gostling, *The Bretons at Home*, 1909, pp. 159–60.

restoration of life and vigour. The wheel, held by a god, is also found on Romano-Gaulish statues. In Christian art we meet with our wheel windows, symbolical, it is believed, of the Sun of Righteousness.

After having seen the "wheels of fortune," one is but little impressed by the spectacle of small models of sailing vessels which may be seen suspended in the churches of the smaller seaport towns of Normandy and Brittany. These models symbolize in a pleasing manner the idea of the Church's protection of mariners. In Belgium, votive offerings of silver horses are met with; they are the gifts of persons whose horses have recovered from some disease, or perhaps from the effects of the "evil eye." These customs are probably of modern date, and, therefore, not directly traceable to heathen times.

It is doubtful whether we could find preserved, in churches on British soil, pagan vestiges exactly comparable with the solar wheel. In early art it is otherwise, as our architecture and ritual abundantly testify. With respect to actual relics, many a parish church shelters some object, quaint or grotesque, which had its origin in no sentiment of a purely Christian character. When superstition waned, these heirlooms, either from oversight, or, more probably, by tacit consent, were often allowed to remain within the sacred building, for the idea of the church as the house of the people never completely died away. The church continued to be the receptacle for these curious relics, and few folk were found to deny the fitness of the custom.

One by one, tiny fragments of testimony accumulate, attesting such a survival and continuance of folk-memory as few men of to-day have suspected. From the mass of facts there emerges the truth of the twofold purpose of Mediaeval church architecture—the religious and the social. Some writers have attempted to interpret the evidence on the principle that, as the ecclesiastical power diminished, the secular increased, and that the sway of custom was brought about by encroachments from the one side or the other alternately. Certainly, the problem must be surveyed from that point of view, yet it appears to me that such an outlook is only partial. For instance —to mention one objection only—at the period when clerical

power was in its heyday, the church fabric appears also to have been most used for social purposes, and this fact seems to stand quite apart from the disorderly tendencies observable in times of irreligion and desecration. Whichever power, clerical or lay, chanced to be uppermost, the parochial customs, as a whole, until within the last few centuries, seem to have been fairly, though not entirely, uniform; and when external causes, whether political or economical, produced a balance of forces, the right to use the church for secondary purposes does not seem to have been seriously challenged. For the strength of the earlier faiths long continued to lie in the recognized union of political, social, and religious interests. There was no gulf fixed between the conceptions of the religious and the secular commonwealth. "Such a distinction," says Kauffmann, "is foreign to ancient modes of thought[1]." And of the tenacity of thought and the persistency of custom we have had ample proof.

[1] F. Kauffmann, *Northern Mythology*, p. 10.

CHAPTER V

THE ORIENTATION OF CHURCHES

ORIENTATION, as the word is commonly understood nowadays, may be described as the principle, and practice, according to which a sacred building or other object is set in an East-to-West line. In speaking of a Christian church, there is implied further that the altar is normally placed at the Eastern end of the building. The word "orientate," it is hardly necessary to say, comes primarily from the Latin *oriri*, to rise, the reference being, of course, to the sun. To get one's bearings with respect to the East was therefore naturally called "orientation." There is a more general signification when the word is employed scientifically: thus, the crystals in a mass of rock may be orientated, and not necessarily to the East. There is also a broader usage of the term, mostly of literary interest, which merely conveys the sense of determination of one's position, physically or mentally, so that even theories and opinions may be orientated, honestly or disingenuously, by their advocates. Under this definition, moreover, a building may be orientated, and yet the chief part need not face the geographical East. But it has been conjectured that there was also a Mediaeval Latin word, *orientare*, which specifically meant "to set towards the East," and thus arose the fuller and more precise connotation familiar to the modern antiquary[1]. From the Mediaeval term we get our verb "to orientate," which, like the briefer and more usual term, "to orient," implies the setting out of a church East to West, with the altar towards the East of the edifice. Merely premising that there is an orientation of graves as well

[1] See *Century Dict.* and *New Oxford Dict.*, s.v.

as of buildings, we will proceed to consider the case of churches only.

The most heedless observer must have noticed the main facts. The choir or chancel of a cathedral or parish church faces East, while the nave runs towards the West. The exceptions form a trifling minority. Casting about for an explanation of these exceptions, it will be found that the buildings which infringe the rule are usually modern, or that the exigencies of space permitted no alternative, or that there has been a spirit of opposition manifested of set purpose. Let us first notice a few examples where the rule is broken. The small, modern church of Well, Lincolnshire, is indeed built East and West, but the altar is situated at the West end. Eastville church, in the same county, runs North and South, its altar being towards the South[1]. St Mary Major, Exeter, which lies to the West of the cathedral, is alined North-East and South-West, but the alteration was probably made in 1866, when the church was rebuilt. The original building was of Norman date[2], and would scarcely be out of line. St Paul's, Covent Garden, built by Inigo Jones in 1633, and rebuilt at the close of the eighteenth century, has its axis about 30° North of the East-to-West line, but the altar stands at what must be called the "East" end of the church. St John's, Chatham, another church which transgresses the principle, was erected in the years immediately preceding the Oxford Movement, at a time when the practice of orientation had grown lax[3]. Several Georgian churches in the Paddington and Marylebone districts are out of line, while, strange to tell, a Primitive Methodist Chapel in Seymour Place, hard by, is properly orientated[4]. The fact is noticeable, since the custom is not widely observed by Nonconformists. Camden church, Peckham, is built askew, but that is doubtless owing to its founders having consisted of a coalition of Nonconformists and dissatisfied churchmen from the mother parish of Camberwell. In the Georgian era, as is well known, there was general slackness:

[1] G. S. Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, 1899, p. 31.

[2] Murray, *Handbook to Devon*, 11th edition, 1895, p. 22.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VII. p. 503.

[4] *Ibid.* VIII. p. 431. (Numerous examples given.)

fonts were often placed in the North and South aisles, ornaments were neglected, brasses stolen, documents mislaid and misused. To this period of slovenly treatment can be traced the anomalous alinement of St George's, Bloomsbury. The Eastern recess having proved too small to receive an altar-piece which had been presented by the Duke of Bedford, the main axis of the church was, as it were, turned through an angle of 90°, and it is now arranged almost North and South, the original chancel being represented by a baptistery[1].

Other churches which do not conform to the usual plan are St Edmund the King, Lombard Street, and Immanuel church, Streatham Common (altar at Western end). A number of French examples might also be given, but even were it possible to compile an exhaustive list, it would only weary the reader.

Roman Catholic churches are sometimes found to have unorthodox alinements, but not so generally as is commonly believed. Frequently, the so-called lack of orientation simply means that the position of the altar is reversed. Thus, St George's Cathedral, in Westminster, like St Peter's at Rome, has its altar at the West end. But since the axis in these cases, as in that of the little Anglican church at Well, previously mentioned, lies East and West, I prefer to consider these churches as not fundamentally violating the rule. To this matter we must presently return. It has been asserted, and afterwards stoutly denied, that disregard of orientation, with respect to the Eastern altar, is a feature of the churches of the Jesuits[2].

A goodly number of modern churches owe their incorrect alinements to the limitations of shape, slope, and area of the ground on which the buildings are placed. Thus, while the old parish church of Hornsey, Middlesex, stands correctly, the new building is sadly discordant. This variation is caused by a corresponding difference in the long axis of the rectangular plot on which it is built. The axis of the Roman Catholic church of the English Martyrs at Streatham, again, is in marked disagreement with that of the Anglican parish church hard by;

[1] *Ibid.* v. pp. 104–5.

[2] C. A. Ward, in *Antiquary*, XIX. 1889, p. 237; M. E. C. Walcott, *Sacred Archaeology*, 1858, p. 238, art. "East"; *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., III. p. 37.

a glance at the manner in which the former edifice is wedged in seems to supply the reason. Whether the North-to-South line of the Church of the Oratory, Brompton, is to be so explained, is more uncertain. Of ancient English buildings which do not orientate, the classic example is found at the Cistercian Abbey of Rievaulx, Yorkshire. A steep bank on the one side of the church, and a river on the other, necessitated an axis from North to South.

Then we have to deal with churches designedly mis-built. The Puritan Sir Walter Mildmay, founder of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, built the original College chapel North and South, as a protest against superstition, and in marked derogation of catholic usage (A.D. 1584). This action led Evelyn to speak of "that zealous house" which was "reformed *ab origine*[1]." The Cambridge example is serviceable as showing the approximate date when early tradition began to be defied.

To-day, except through pure carelessness on the part of architects or builders, the Church observes the broad rule, both with respect to the axis and the Eastward altar. One or two critical instances will render this evident. When, in India, under the first Bishop of Calcutta, Dr Middleton (A.D. 1814–22), the question arose whether the chancel of a church should not face the city of Jerusalem, it was decided to build towards the East, and leave the sacred city out of account[2]. Again, it was mooted, a few years ago, whether churches situated in, and West of, the diocese of Honolulu in the Sandwich Islands (157° 53′ W.), should not have occidentation, rather than orientation, and the verdict was that the chancel should point to the rising sun[3]. Someone has remarked, in this connection, that in crossing to another hemisphere, the Northern and Southern points may be said to change values[4], but this does not affect the question of orientating from a given place on a fixed meridian. Moreover, since Honolulu lies 21° North of the Equator, it is outside this consideration altogether.

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., v. pp. 104–5; M. H. Bloxam, *Gothic Eccles. Architecture*, 9th edition, 1849, p. 314.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., II. p. 352.

[3] *Ibid.* 4th Ser., X. pp. 413, 476.

[4] *Ibid.*

Although, as just stated, the modern builder follows the rule, he appears to lack precision in his methods. This opinion has been expressed in private letters to the writer from such high authorities as Professor Reginald Blomfield, Mr. H. Phillips Fletcher, and Mr P. Mainwaring Johnston. Mr Johnston says that even in the matter of inserting the points of the compass on architectural drawings there is greater laxity than was formerly the case. The builder seems often to rely on a small portable compass, which frequently is not corrected for the variation of the needle.

By way of parenthesis, it may be noted that the lodges of Freemasons were formerly orientated, and, although the rule is not always now followed in towns, where meeting places are numerous, yet the house of assembly is still called Orient, and, in the case of a grand lodge, Grand Orient. The explanation is that the Freemasons claimed to be descended from the old ecclesiastical builders[1]. From the annals of Freemasonry we can also gather valuable information concerning the alinement of churches. In some of the Scotch lodges, there are said to exist documents which describe the actual method pursued. The site of the altar having been decided upon, a pole was thrust into the ground, and a day appointed for the building to be commenced. "On the evening previous, the Patrons, Ecclesiastics, and Masons assembled, and spent the night in devotional exercises: one being placed to watch the rising of the sun, gave notice when his rays appeared above the horizon. When fully in view, the Master Mason sent out a man with a rod, which he ranged in line between the altar and the sun, and thus fixed the line of orientation[2]."

Wordsworth refers to the ceremony in the following stanzas (he is alluding to the rising of the sun):

> "He rose, and straight—as by divine command,
> They, who had waited for that sign to trace
> Their work's foundation, gave with careful hand
> To the high Altar its determined place;

[1] K. R. H. Mackenzie, *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, 1877, art. "Orientation," p. 537; "Grand Orient," p. 291.

[2] W. A. Laurie, *Hist. of Free Masonry and the Grand Lodge of Scotland*, 1859, p. 414.

> Mindful of Him, who in the Orient born,
> There liv'd, and on the Cross His life resign'd,
> And who, from out the regions of the morn
> Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge mankind[1]."

In passing, it will be noticed that Wordsworth seems to attach importance to the fact that the Nativity took place in the East, as if that were the reason for orientation.

Having seen that, in our day, the custom agrees faithfully with a formulated tradition, we will go back, and, pursuing the link-to-link method, strive to ascertain the origin of the idea. There existed a sound tradition in A.D. 1584, for, as already stated, Sir Walter Mildmay deliberately broke with it. A French example will help to carry us on our way. During the fourteenth century the church of Saint-Benoît, in Paris, had its grand altar turned towards the West, and hence bore the nickname of Saint-Benoît-mal-Tourné, i.e. "Sanctus Benedictus male versus." The church was rebuilt during the reign of Francis I. (A.D. 1515–47), when the altar was made to face East. The name, says M. L'Abbé Migne, was consequently changed to Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourné, which the narrator claims as the equivalent of "Bene versus[2]." It has been questioned whether *bétourné* does not really mean *mal-tourné*[3], but the point to be noticed is, that orientation, in the fuller sense, was recognized in the early sixteenth century, and that even in the fourteenth, a true alinement was observed, though the altar was placed at the wrong end. M. L'Abbé Migne, indeed, asserts that orientation in France is known to date from the eleventh century at least[4]. Yet, in modern times, the French practice has become very uncertain, and numerous instances might be given of North-to-South alinements.

William Durand, commonly known under his Latinized name, Durandus, who was born in Provence, in A.D. 1237, has some interesting remarks on orientation. Following St Isidore, he connects the word *temple* with *contemplate*, a kinship which

[1] Wordsworth, "On seeing the Foundation preparing for the erection of Rydal Chapel, Westmoreland" (1823), vv. 3, 4.

[2] M. L'Abbé Migne, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Sacrée* (in series, "Nouvelle Encyclopédie Théologique"), 1851, t. II. p. 475.

[3] C. A. Ward, in *Antiquary*, XIX. p. 233 n.

[4] Migne, *loc. cit.*

recent lexicographers do not discountenance. While "contemplating," the worshippers must look towards the East, and Durandus lays down the rule that the exact position should be determined at the equinox. This would ensure that the sections of the building to the right and left of the true East-and-West line should be equal. Thus would the Church Militant show that she behaved herself with moderation, a virtue not symbolized when the median line is taken at the solstice[1].

Dr Daniel Rock asserts that the Saxons built their churches East-and-West, and numerous instances might readily be given to substantiate his statement. A specific example is cited by Dr Rock himself. Wolstan, monk of Winchester (A.D. 990), speaks of a church built by Bishop St Ethelwold (b. A.D. 908, d. 984) as pointing to the East. Like Durandus, Dr Rock favoured the equinoctial East, and urged that, in cases where the site was unfavourable, the East-and-West line should be approached as nearly as possible. The chancel should face South-East rather than North-West, assuming that the axis must run in that line[2]. This principle was formerly undoubtedly considered binding. Brand, quoting from a history of Birmingham, tells how St Bartholomew's chapel, in that city, "veres toward the North," because the ground space would admit of no other position. In planning St John's chapel, Deritend, Birmingham, the architect was so anxious to catch the Eastern point, that he lost the line of the street, hence the writer humorously adds that the designer sacrificed to the East[3]. Another instance of an attempt to keep in harmony with Mediaeval teaching, is seen at Hornsey new church (p. 207 *supra*), which has its chancel at the Southern end, in preference to the Northern.

Granting that the Saxon churches show orientation, we are led to suppose that the idea goes back still earlier, and this is confirmed by facts. In the "Apostolical Constitutions," a document dating probably from the latter part of the fourth

[1] Gulielmus Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, l. I, tr. J. M. Neale and B. Webb, 1843, p. 216.

[2] D. Rock, *The Church of our Fathers*, ed. G. W. Hart and W. H. Frere, 1903, I. pp. 172–6.

[3] J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Sir H. Ellis, 1841, II. p. 324.

century, it is ordained that the churches are to be built oblong, with the head to the East, and the congregation is directed to pray Eastward[1]. So early as A.D. 472, there was a tradition that the Apostles turned towards the East in prayer[2]. Leo I., in A.D. 443, is found condemning the people for bowing to the rising sun as they stood on the steps in the Court of St Peter's[3]. St Basil, who flourished in the middle of the fourth century A.D., alludes distinctly to the custom of turning towards the East in prayer[4]. Several early writers might be quoted for corroborative testimony on this point. The fourth Provincial Council of Milan (A.D. 1576), speaks of the practice of orientating churches as being usual and in accordance with tradition (*antiquus mos et probata traditio*)[5]. Thus there is cumulative evidence, fairly satisfactory in character, of deference paid to the Eastern position, practically from the time when the Christians began to build their own churches[6].

Certain pronouncements to the contrary, which, if accepted, are calculated to weaken the force of these arguments, and to modify our views on the general question of orientation, must not be withheld. For example, Walcott asserts that orientation has never been a law of the Church, and that it has probably an Eastern origin. He also points out that, in Rome, the entrance to a Christian place of worship was frequently at the East, and that the priest at the altar faced the people[7]. The Romano-British church discovered at Silchester (see p. 23 *supra*)

[1] *Apost. Constit.* II. 57, "Ac primo quidem aedes fit oblonga, ad Orientem versa, ex utraque parte Pastophoria versum Orientem habens, et quae navi sit similis"; W. Smith and S. Cheetham, *Dict. of Christian Antiquities*, 1880, art. "Orientation." The date of the "Constitutions" is discussed by the Rev. de Lacy O'Leary, in *The Apostolical Constitutions and Cognate Documents*, 1906, p. 69.

[2] Rock, *op. cit.* I. p. 173.

[3] C. A. Ward, *Antiquary*, XIX. p. 237 (authority given).

[4] Bloxam, *op. cit.* p. 314 n.; Migne, *op. cit.* p. 475; John, Bishop of Bristol, *Eccles. Hist. of Second and Third Centuries*, 2nd edition, N.D., pp. 62, 202.

[5] J. D. Mansi, continuation of *Sacrorum Conciliorum, nova...Collectio* (by P. Labbe and G. Cossart), 1902, t. XXXIV. p. 198.

[6] I. McBurney and S. Neil, *Cyclo. Univ. Hist.*, 1855, p. 101, give the date of the first Christian churches as A.D. 224. Cf. Dr J. H. Blunt and Sir W. G. F. Phillimore, *Book of Church Law*, 5th edition, 1888, pp. 309–10, and 309 n. (authorities given); A. Lamson, *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, ed. H. Ierson, 1875, p. 405 n.

[7] M. E. C. Walcott, *Church and Conventual Arrangement*, 1861, pp. 61–2.

must be noted as an instance of this kind of ground plan. This "basilica," as proved by the foundations, had a Western apse, and presumably, therefore, a Western altar, the entrance being towards the East. Fergusson, in his *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, affirms that orientation is wholly a peculiarity of Northern or Gothic races, and that the Italians never knew or practised the custom; it is found only where the inhabitants of an Italian district had been largely superseded by Gothic peoples[1]. Professor Baldwin Brown, again, asserts that "the Church of early times generally, and the Church of Rome throughout," were indifferent to the practice of orientation. A fourth writer, whose opinion carries great weight, Professor E. B. Tylor, deals with Jewish influence, and concludes that it was scarcely effective in establishing the principle of orientation in the course of European history. He is rather of opinion that the rise of the Christian custom is sufficiently accounted for by Asiatic sun-worshippers, such as the Persians. The rite of orientation, he considers, was unknown to primitive Christianity, and was developed within its first four centuries[2].

Let us examine these statements. That orientation has never been a law of the Church may be literally true. I can find no such obligation recorded in works like Sir R. Phillimore's *Ecclesiastical Law*. Yet Dr Rock refers to an authority, "one deeply read in liturgical lore,"—Bellotte, who pronounced him guilty of mortal sin who wilfully built a church which was not directed towards the East[3]. Again, Mgr Barbier de Montault, while regretting that the canonists no longer make orientation rigorously compulsory, observes that the rule, all the same, remains prescribed in the rubric of the Missal ("*qui n'en reste pas moins inscrite dans la rubrique du Missel*")[4]. Above this, the evidence already adduced shows that the rule has had a very general acceptation in England since the Saxon period at least.

[1] J. Fergusson, *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, 2nd edition, 1859, p. 516 n.; cf. G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, II. p. 22.

[2] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 1891, II. pp. 426–7.

[3] Rock, *op. cit.* I. p. 173.

[4] Mgr X. Barbier de Montault, *Traité pratique de la Construction...des Églises*, 1878, t. I. p. 18. Cf. E. H. J. Reusens, *Éléments d'Archéologie chrétienne*, 2nd edition, 1885, t. I. p. 348, t. II. pp. 13–14.

The churches of Rome, and indeed, of Italy as a whole, are admittedly irregular in their adherence to strict orientation. Yet even these churches largely conform to the principle, in its wider sense of East-to-West alinement. Very frequently, however, the second, and perhaps almost equally important part of the principle is ignored, that is, the altar is placed at the Western end, instead of at the Eastern. St Peter's itself supplies a good example of this arrangement; other instances are found in St John Lateran, San Paolo fuori le Mura, and Sta Maria Maggiore. In these churches, now often called basilicas, the entrance is at the East, and the sanctuary at the West[1]. Out of fifty early churches in Rome examined by Mr G. G. Scott, forty were found to have the sanctuary at the West; of the remaining examples, "there are only seven which appear to have retained their original form and which have an Eastern sanctuary[2]." Of the forty churches just mentioned, as of some later ones, it must be noted that the alinement is by no means true East-to-West, hence the epigram of the French wit: "*Tout système d'orientation peut trouver son modèle à Rome.*"

To leave the matter here would nevertheless convey a false impression. It is credibly asserted that, in the cases where the altar is at the Western extremity, the celebrant faces the East, thus taking the same relative position personally as when, under a reverse arrangement, he turns his back on the congregation[3]. If, then, the axis of the church be situated East-to-West, and if the prayers be offered towards the East, orientation cannot be truly said to be neglected: the relative dispositions of portico and altar become secondary considerations.

Dr Rock, with a manifest anxiety to reconcile the diversity of practice in Rome, submitted, as an explanation, that isolated basilicas (= Christian churches) grew up over narrow, lonely pagan grottos, or the graves of martyrs, or sprang out of the halls of patrician converts[4]. That many of the anomalous

[1] F. T. Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, 1895, p. 68.

[2] J. Fergusson, *Hist. of Architecture*, ed. R. Phené Spiers, 1893, I. pp. 514–5 n. A list is given showing the exact orientation of each church.

[3] Durandus, *op. cit.* p. 44; *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VII. pp. 469–70.

[4] Rock, *op. cit.* I. pp. 172–6.

alinements may be thus accounted for is probable, but too much must not be made of this method of harmonizing contradictions. Other writers, like Fergusson, have urged that the church was a basilica, or court of justice adapted to Christian worship. The word "basilica," by the way, is said not to have been used by writers or architects of Byzantine times[1]—a significant detail, if correct (cf. p. 151 *supra*). For it is contended that there is, in Rome, no well-authenticated instance of the conversion of any pagan forensic basilica into a Christian church, though there are abundant examples of pagan temples which became Christian sanctuaries[2]. The actual secular basilicas would generally be still required, and still employed, century after century, for the transaction of legal business; the heathen temples, now useless for their original purpose, would be adapted and consecrated by the teachers of the new faith. The Christians most likely copied the basilican type of building for their meeting-places because it offered the simplest and most economical plan of accommodating an immense body of worshippers[3].

An attempt has been made to evolve order out of chaos by supposing that, during the early days of the Church, in some parts of the Empire, the priest stood on the Western side of the altar, namely, the side remote from the people, and that, during the celebrations, he looked towards the East, over the heads of the worshippers. The body of the church thus lay to the East of the sanctuary, and the altar was interposed between priest and congregation. At a later date, for some unassigned reason, the priest changed his position with respect to the altar, and stood with his back to the people, hence the ground-plan of the building was modified, so that the main entrance was fixed at the West, and the sanctuary at the East[4]. Thus the Eastward

[1] R. Phené Spiers, in his edition of Fergusson's *Hist. of Architecture*, 1893, I. p. 506 n.

[2] Spiers, *loc. cit.* (authorities given). Concerning the origin of the Christian basilica, see O. M. Dalton, *Guide to Early Christian and Byzantine Antiq.* (Brit. Mus.), 1903, pp. 32–5.

[3] Spiers, *loc. cit.*; B. Fletcher and B. F. Fletcher, *Hist. of Architecture*, 5th edition, 1905, pp. 136, 179–80.

[4] R. Sturgis, *Dict. of Archit. and Building*, 1902, III. p. 34 (Art. "Orientation"); Reusens, *op. cit.* t. I p. 147.

position of the priest was the essential feature, not the position of the altar in the church.

Fergusson's dictum concerning the churches of Italy, however, need not be accepted without demur. It has been endorsed by writers like Sir E. Beckett (Lord Grimthorpe)[1], but is considered by others to involve overstatement. Fergusson himself admits that, while it is only by accident that we find the rule observed in Pisa, Bologna, and Ferrara, yet in more Northerly ("German") cities like Milan and Verona, the orientation will be found correct nine times out of ten[2]. He accounts for the absence of orientation in the three first-named cities by supposing that in them the original population was not submerged by "Gothic races." Whatever may be the precise meaning which Fergusson attaches to this phrase is of little moment, for it is fairly certain, as we shall soon see, that the principle was put into practice by peoples to whom the term could by no licence be applied. Therefore, at any rate, the custom was not, as he believes, wholly a feature of the Gothic builders. Let us recall the fact that seven out of fifty early churches in Rome are carefully oriented. Link this with the fact that many other ancient churches in that city are more or less accurately alined, and the conclusion is clear that the direction of the median line was rarely left to chance. This verdict is confirmed by an examination of early Romanesque churches elsewhere. In Auvergne, for instance, the present writer ascertained, by a careful use of the compass, that oriented churches were very common, yet Gothic influence has not, even in our day, penetrated that region to any considerable extent.

Professor Tylor's opinion that the Jews exercised little influence on the development of the custom among the early Christians, claims great respect and attention, because of the high authority which he deservedly possesses. Yet it may be

[1] Sir E. Beckett, *A Book on Building*, 2nd edition, 1880, p. 85.

[2] Fergusson, *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, p. 516 n. The probable Western "orientation" of the crypts of the early minsters of Ripon and Hexham has been thought to be due to Italian influence (F. Bond, *Gothic Architecture in England*, 1905, p. 155 n.).

doubted whether he has not under-estimated Jewish influences, and over-estimated the effects of Jewish contact with the Persians and other peoples living East of Palestine. In the first place, one is led to conclude that Professor Tylor's argument is somewhat weakened by the stress which is laid upon the differences of position adopted in prayer, with respect to the sun. The Brahmans, we are told, pray towards the East, the Thugs towards the West. In the first case, the symbolism represents hope, the birth of life, the glory of the rising sun; in the antithesis of the second, the gloom and horror of death, typified by the departure of the life-giver. These distinctions, though not trivial in themselves, and even less so in their later developments, seem to be largely obliterated by the very existence of adoration performed sunwards. The essence of orientation, in its early stages, appears, if one may so express it, to consist in respect paid to the sun. This deference is proved by the East-and-West axial line, as exemplified in primitive temples and monuments. Where the altar was at the Western end, the sun's rays fell on the sacred object through the Eastern doors at sunrise. As the centuries pass by, we still find rival opinions as to the proper positions for the altar or other sacred object. The alinement is agreed upon, but the question arises, Shall the sanctuary be East or West?

Now do we not find noticeable traces of the solar idea in the Hebrew Scriptures, with a certain tendency, moreover, to the adoption of the Eastern rather than the Western position? The Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon had their entrances towards the East, and in each building the Holy of Holies was at the West. There was also an Eastern porch to Herod's Temple[1]. The student of the Bible and the Apocrypha will be familiar with numerous passages, which, without any wresting from the context, appear to contain the germ of the idea of orientation[2], displayed in respect paid to prayer at sunrise. In the Wisdom of Solomon, xvi. 28, these words occur, "We must prevent the

[1] W. Smith, *Concise Dict. Bible*, 1900, Art. "Temple."

[2] For example, Psalm lxxxviii. 13; cxix. 147; Wisdom of Solomon, xvi. 28; Zech. xiv. 4. See also the remarks in *The Evil Eye*, pp. 65–6. Walcott, *Sacred Archaeol.*, art. "Orientation," has much curious lore.

sun to give thee thanks, and at the dayspring pray to thee.' Language of a very similar kind is found in more than one of the Psalms. It is undeniable that repeated attempts were made by the monotheistic Hebrews to prevent adoration of the sun. The practice is implicitly forbidden in the Second Commandment, and expressly in such passages as Deut. iv. 19. Why should these prohibitions have been necessary, unless the Jews were prone, in this matter as in some others, either to copy pagan rites, or to follow primal instincts inherited from forefathers among whom solar worship was common? Ezekiel was horror-stricken at the sight of the five-and-twenty men who worshipped the sun with their backs toward the Temple and their faces toward the East[1]. Josiah found it necessary to put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense to Baal, and to the sun, moon, and planets; the "chariots of the sun" he burned with fire[2]. The attention paid to direction in offering one's prayers is illustrated again by the case of Daniel. Domiciled in a heathen land, he prayed with his face towards Jerusalem, although that city lies West, and not East, of Babylon[3]. To look again toward the Holy Temple was the prayer uttered by Jonah when in the belly of the fish[4]. In short, prayer offered towards Jerusalem was actually recommended, if not stipulated, by Solomon, as a condition of success in warfare[5]. The Jews, in later times, seem always to have been zealous in obeying the precept, though it is not recorded that they carry a compass with them for the purpose, as the Mohammedans are said to do[6].

The Book of Job contains a remarkable and enlightening passage concerning sun-worship. Protesting his integrity, the patriarch says: "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge[7]." Now, the ancient

[1] Ezek. viii. 16. The influence of the sun on architecture and mysticism is dealt with by W. R. Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*, 1892, pp. 174–200.

[2] II. Kings xxiii. 5, 11. Cf. Smith, *Concise Dict. Bible*, art. "Sun."

[3] Dan. vi. 10. [4] Jonah ii. 4. [5] I. Kings viii. 43–5.

[6] *Antiquary*, XIX. pp. 235–6. [7] Job xxxi. 26–8.

Greeks used to kiss their hands as an act of worship to the sun, and Tertullian had to complain that even Christians would move their lips toward the sunrise, as if affecting adoration[1]. Grimm says that Teutonic peoples would swear an oath by the sun, stretching out their hands to the all-seeing god[2].

A moment's pause may be made to notice a remarkable parallel, suggested by Barclay. On the one side, we have the stretching out vertically of the separated fingers. On the other, as Barclay observes, we have the five large trilithons of the outer "horsehoe" of Stonehenge, graduated so that the central one corresponds to the middle finger of the hand, and the other trilithons to the other fingers, each to each. Similarly, if the fingers are brought together so as to form a circle, we get the symbol employed in the sacred salute to the sun[3]. Barclay's comparisons may be fanciful, but who shall deny their aptness? We cannot forget the symbolism adopted in the Greek and Latin churches when the Benediction is pronounced. Even a temporary assent to Barclay's hypothesis leads us to ask further, Whence came the custom of shading the face with the hands when the worshipper is engaged in prayer? Did the habit originate in protecting the eyes from the sun during the act of supplication?

But to return: we have seen that sun-worship, and prayer offered towards the East, or towards a hallowed site, are abundantly illustrated in the Old Testament. Again, if the Jews did not practise orientation in our specific sense of the word, they observed an East-to-West system in planning their chief place of worship. The older generations of Jews, at least, could not have been ignorant of orientation. As bondmen in Egypt, they must have become acquainted with the principle. In Canaan, they were subjected, as Professor Tylor states, to the influences

[1] *Prim. Culture*, II. p. 296.

[2] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.* II. p. 704. Cf. Westermarck, *Origin and Devel. of the Moral Ideas*, II. pp. 120–2.

[3] E. Barclay, *Stonehenge*, 1895, p. 97. With the instances given, we may compare the symbols used by the Greek and Roman churches in pronouncing the benediction: the Greek symbol, C, formed by curving the thumb and the third finger inwards; the Latin, the extension of the thumb and two fingers to represent the Trinity. Cf. *Evil Eye*, ch. VII.

of solar worship on all sides. Their heathen neighbours, the Phoenicians, bowed themselves to Baal, the Ammonites offered sacrifices to Molech, and the Syrians worshipped the god Hadad[1].

If the probabilities favour a knowledge of the idea of orientation among the Jews of the Old Testament times, reason must be shown for the assumption of a complete break between the ancient practice and the customs of the Apostolic period. For primitive Christianity was not only in great measure developed from, but was a fulfilment of, the older Judaism. The "Sun of Righteousness" in Malachi has its counterpart in the "Day spring from on high" of St Luke, the "Day star" of the Second Epistle of Peter, and the "Morning star" of the Apocalypse[2]. The "Light of the World," or some variant of the phrase, occurs again and again. While, therefore, it would be folly to force these figurative expressions too far, it would equally be a mistake to overlook them. There is a possibility, then, of an early Christian as well as a Hebraic groundwork for subsequent developments of orientation. Perhaps the lesson was soon reinforced by Christian contact with converts from paganism, for, as already shown, we do not get far into the Christian era before we meet with oriented churches and the custom of praying towards the East. During the rite of baptism, too, as we learn from St Jerome, the candidate turned towards the West to renounce the devil, and then faced East to confess allegiance to Christ[3].

This specific inquiry may now be dropped, yet a brief survey of religions and races other than the Jewish will not only elucidate the subject generally, but will cast a light back on the question which we are leaving. We are informed, on good authority, that, in the Holy Eastern Church, orientation is "universal through Asia as well as Europe[4]." Again, with respect to the ancient Coptic churches of Egypt, it is asserted

[1] Smith, *Concise Dict. Bible*, art. "Sun." Cf. *Evil Eye*, p. 65.

[2] Mal. iv. 2; Luke i. 78; 2 Pet. i. 19; Rev. ii. 28.

[3] See, *e.g.* Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* II. p. 318.

[4] J. M. Neale, *Hist. of Holy Eastern Church* (General Introduction), 1850, I. p. 222.

by Butler that the entrance is "almost invariably towards, if not in, the Western side, while the sanctuaries lie always on the Eastern[1]." This authority suggests that the early Christians may have derived the practice of orientation from Egypt. The ancient Egyptian temples afford wide scope for discussion. Sir J. Norman Lockyer and other workers have arranged these temples in groups according to their orientation. One temple, at Karnak, is said to be so planned that it acts as a gigantic telescope which allows a two minutes' flash at the summer solstice, when the building is found to be accurately oriented[2]. Other temples are so alined that, on the anniversary of the dedication, the rays of the sun fall on the innermost sanctuary, and light up the statues placed therein. The sanctuaries, it should be explained, are situated at the Western end, so that the sun's beams would shine through the Eastern entrance. Other groups of structures may, perhaps, exhibit "orientation" to Sirius, Spica, Capella, and so on[3]. The evidence goes to show that considerable nicety of observation was required to get the true axis; probably this was done either by watching the shadow cast by a vertical object when the sun was on the meridian, by stretching a cord between two stakes, carefully alined, or by keeping a standard line constantly directed towards the North Pole of the heavens. It has just been stated that Egyptian temples are sources of much controversy, and it would be unwise to attempt further to make clear one complicated question by introducing another fully as perplexing. Merely observing, then,

[1] A. J. Butler, *Anc. Coptic Churches of Egypt*, 1884, I. p. 10.

[2] E. J. Simcox, *Prim. Civilisations*, 1897, II. p. 438.

[3] Consult Sir J. Norman Lockyer's *Dawn of Astronomy* (1894), especially chs. vii., viii., ix., xxx., xxxviii.; also *Stonehenge*, pp. 1–5. The views expressed, however, have been much canvassed (e.g. *Edinburgh Review*, CLXXX. 1894, pp. 418–432); S. Laing, *Human Origins*, 1892, pp. 136–149; E. J. Simcox, *op. cit.* II. pp. 438–440; W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh*, 1885, pp. 125–7 (for orientation of Pyramids). In England there is a tendency, in certain districts, for early churches to be ranged in a North-to-South line, and roughly at equal distances (F. J. Bennett, in *South-Eastern Naturalist*, 1904, pp. 29–36). Again, the churchyard yews of the Surrey villages, Alfold, Dunsfold and Hambledon, stand "almost in a mathematically straight line," the Dunsfold tree being almost exactly midway (E. Parker, *Highways and Byways of Surrey*, 1908, p. 165). In all these cases the positions, where not determined by geographical and geological considerations, are, I think, accidental.

that Sir Norman Lockyer has submitted evidence to show that the orientation of Egyptian temples influenced the temples of Greece, a country which he believes to represent a transitional stage of the custom[1], we again turn our attention to English churches.

The first obvious fact to demand notice is that few of our churches face the true equinoctial East. Over sixty years ago a series of Norfolk churches was examined, when it was found that, at West Beckham, the axis was due East; at St Peter's, Bampton, so much as 20° North of East; and in a number of other examples the discrepancies varied from 5° to 8°[2]. In 1856, a paper was read by the Rev. W. Airy, in which he stated that, among churches which he had inspected, there were hundreds deviating between 5° and 10° from the true East, six or seven diverged above 20°, and one more than 30°[3]. The late Mr T. W. Shore, whose knowledge of Hampshire was very comprehensive and thorough, found that a line about 20° North of East was favoured in that county, about seventy churches having this inclination[4]. If, then, we assume, for the moment, that the orientation was taken from the rising sun on the day when the building was commenced, the Hampshire figures would indicate that operations were usually begun either about a month after the vernal equinox or a month before the autumnal equinox. This conclusion must not be finally accepted without inquiry. From an old map known as John Leake's *Exact Surveigh* (1667), it has been found that hardly any two city churches then existing agreed in their axes, nor with the true East-to-West line. Such is the assertion made in Smith's *Old Topography of London*, but I doubt whether the map, which one

[1] Lockyer, *Dawn of Astron.*, ch. xxxviii. For the orientation of Chaldaean ziggurats, or temple-observatories, see Laing, *Human Origins*, pp. 149–52. For Malabar, see Simcox, *op. cit.* II. p. 440. The oriented buildings of Mashonaland are probably co-eval with some of the Old Testament practices. See J. T. Bent, *Ruined Cities of Mashonaland*, 1892, pp. 120–149, 358–361. But Dr R. MacIver, in *Mediaeval Rhodesia*, 1906, argues for a Mediaeval date.

[2] *Handbook of Eng. Ecclesiology* (Eccles. Soc.), 1847, pp. 39–41.

[3] Quoted in *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., V. pp. 500–1. Mr Airy's paper, *On Festival Orientation*, was read before the Beds. Archit. and Archaeol. Soc., 11th Nov. 1856. (I have not been able to examine a copy of the original paper; it is missing from the volume belonging to the British Museum. W. J.)

[4] *Jour. Anthrop. Inst.*, XX. 1890, p. 17.

may see in the Library of the British Museum, will bear the strictest tests. The authority just cited affirms that he made minute measurements for his plan of Westminster and discovered that even such close neighbours as Westminster Abbey, St Margaret's, and St Catherine's in the Little Cloister, vary many points from each other[1]. Sir Henry Chauncy had noticed similar variations in Hertfordshire at the close of the sixteenth century, and had explained them on the theory of seasonal alinement just given[2]. It is needless to adduce further examples: let the student take a carefully adjusted compass, and test a number of churches for himself. Like the present writer, he will find that he rarely meets with a chancel which faces exactly East.

If we scan the pages of works on ecclesiology and symbolism we shall find hypotheses regarding orientation in great abundance. Whether or not the Christian practice came directly from Jewish antecedents, concerning which question, as we have seen, there is a doubt, its ultimate origin must be sought among pagan peoples. Yet the old authors were mainly unaware of these beginnings, and they, like the common folk, were driven to invent secondary explanations. And it may well be that the subsidiary beliefs were, at certain periods, fully effective—that builders did orient churches for this or that symbolical reason, unconscious meanwhile of a deeper cause which lay behind, rooted in past heathenism and strengthened by long prescription.

As we follow the tortuous threads of Mediaeval and later traditions, it becomes plain that some of the clues may be dropped as valueless. Thus, because the Tabernacle and the Temple had each the Holy Place towards the West, and because the Jews turned their faces thitherward in prayer, some writers have ingeniously supposed that the early Christians adopted the opposite arrangement, in order to mark the advent of the new Gospel. In like manner, urge these writers, the Day of Rest was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week[3].

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VII. p. 166.

[2] Sir H. Chauncy, *Histor. Antiquities of Hertfordshire*, 1700, pp. 43–4.

[3] Walcott, *Sacred Archaeol.*, p. 238.

This hypothesis respecting orientation, born in the study of the mystic, is too whimsical and lacking in proof to be seriously considered.

Two of the early Fathers submit that, since Christ, while on the Cross, looked towards the West, His followers should therefore turn towards the East to seek His face[1]. Another view is that, at the Second Advent, Christ will appear from the East, hence worship and regard should be paid towards that point of the heavens. The East was the traditional cradle of the human family; the Magi came from the East; in that quarter, relatively to Western Christendom, Christ was born, and from that quarter He ascended to heaven. To the East lies the traditional land to which we return after life's pilgrimage[2]. St Basil had a curious theory that ancient churches were built towards the equinoctial East in order that worshippers might face the Garden of Eden, the terrestrial Paradise. As Reusens puts it, "*nous devons tourner nos regards vers le paradis terrestre que Dieu planta à Eden vers l'orient*[3]." The last of these esoteric explanations worth mentioning is that the devout have always been anxious to look towards Jerusalem in prayer; hence altars are built to face that quarter. To this plea, Dr Neale replies that orientation in the Eastern Church is as distinctly an Asiatic as a European practice, hence the idea is self-contradictory[4].

Here we encounter a kind of side-theory which has long been a favourite with liturgical writers. It will be remembered that Durandus laid down the ideal rule of building so as to face the equinoctial East. But we have also seen that this counsel of perfection has been little heeded. The obvious explanation of the exceptions is that the sun's varying daily position has resulted in diversity of alinement. The obvious, however, not always being the true, other reasons have been sought, and other theories formulated. Hence arose the attractive "Saint's Day theory," to the effect that the axis of the building depended on

[1] P. Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire Universel*, 1874, art. "Orientation."

[2] Barbier de Montault, *op. cit.* t. I. p. 19. (See chap. iv. generally.) Walcott, *Sacred Archaeol.*, art. "Orientation."

[3] E. H. J. Reusens, *Éléments d'Archéologie chrétienne*, second edition, 1885, t. I. p. 146. Cf. Migne, *op. cit.* t. II. p. 475.

[4] Neale, *op. cit.*, Pt I. p. 222.

the point of sunrise which corresponded to the day of the patron saint to whom the church was dedicated. So far as I am aware, the idea is not traceable, in writing, earlier than the middle of the seventeenth century, but this origin may perchance be pushed backward as the question is further studied. The following account may supply a clue.

Silas Taylor, otherwise Silas Domville, was a captain in the Parliamentary army, who later devoted himself to antiquarian pursuits. Careless in money matters, he died in debt, and his manuscripts were sold by his creditors at his death, in A.D. 1678. One manuscript contains this passage: "In the days of yore, when a church was to be built, they watched and prayed on the vigil of the dedication, and took that point of the horizon where the sun arose from the East, which makes that variation, so that few [churches] stand true, except those built between the two equinoxes. I have experimented (*sic*) some churches, and have found the line to point to that part of the horizon where the sun arises on the day of that Saint to whom the church is dedicated[1]." Noting, incidentally, that the expression, "between the two equinoxes," is evidently a slip, and that the writer means "at the two equinoxes," we are struck by the likeness between this account and that which is credited to the old Masonic lodges. The Saint's Day theory is merely an amplification of the earlier Masonic idea, a specific practical mode of orientation being introduced.

The theory just given has been productive of an abiding controversy. It has been sanctioned by several authorities, among others by Sir Norman Lockyer[2]. But, although the subject will bear deeper investigation, there is already sufficient evidence available to prove that the theory is faulty. There exist well-established cases of variation which cannot be forced under the rule. Again, some saints have several festivals allotted

[1] Brand, *Pop. Antiq.*, II. pp. 6–7; *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., IV. p. 133. The passage is based on a manuscript by Aubrey, written in 1678, entitled *Customs and Manners of the English*. During the Commonwealth, Domville ransacked the Cathedral libraries of Hereford and Worcester with great zeal, and was guilty of filching at least one document (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, under "Domville, Silas"). Hence he may have got his information from early sources.

[2] *Dawn of Astron.*, p. 96.

to them: St Nicholas has two, St Martin three, St John four, St Peter five, St Mary the Virgin eight[1]. Suppose, moreover, the case of an ancient church dedicated, we will say, to St Barnabas, and further assume that the present-day observer examines the orientation and finds it correct for the day of that saint, June 11th. The theory would still fail, since, by an Act of Parliament passed in the year 1752, eleven days were omitted from the calendar, and the orientation would, by the hypothesis, have been taken on May 30th. In considering ancient churches, therefore, the change in reckoning must be allowed for at the start. To meet the necessities of such an example as that proposed, it must also be granted that the advice of Durandus to build at the equinox was not generally followed. But we have seen that the facts are in accord with such an assumption, so that this minor objection falls to the ground. Once more; arguing from the fact that the village feast, which is usually held on the Saint's Day, does not always coincide with the dedication festival, Mr Airy concluded that the theory under consideration was invalid. Without prejudicing the general verdict, we notice that this contention is impaired by evidence which proves that the dates of many village feasts have, at various times, been changed to suit local convenience (cf. p. 191 *supra*).

A more damaging argument is supplied by Mr Airy's assertion that he had never met with one church pointing to the place of sunrise between the 1st of May and the 9th of August[2]. If this testimony were unassailable, it would seem to indicate at least an approximation to the rule of Durandus—a pushing back of building operations towards early spring (March 22nd) or forwards to autumn (Sept. 22nd). Unfortunately, we do not know the church which, according to Mr Airy, has a deflection of 30°; unless it be situated in the Northern part of Britain it must fall between the 1st of May and the 9th of August. One cannot agree with Mr Airy's contentions that festival orientation involved too great a knowledge of the variation of sunrise, that the "ancients" [apparently the Mediaeval builders] did not observe such "refinements," that they had no idea of the sun's movements "in his

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., v. pp. 500–1.

[2] W. Airy, *op. cit.*

course Northward and Southward to the τροπαὶ ἡελίοιο" [the solstices]. On the contrary, we believe that from very early times rough observations of this kind must have been taken with some frequency. The possession of this knowledge by our forefathers does not, of course, prove the case for the Saint's Day theory. But between the idea of dedication alinements and Mr Airy's conclusion that the variations are accidental, and represent attempts to make the fabrics bear to the East as nearly as possible, there is room for a middle opinion. Should Domville's assertion prove true, then, whatever may have been the practice of the early Fathers, the Mediaeval builders were imbued with the symbolism of festival dedication and alinement, and would not fail to give effect to their ideal. Granted that this practice cuts at the root of the equinoctial precept, there is yet a possibility that, as with so many other customs, uniformity was never attained. Exceptions alone, numerous though they be, do not disprove the theory altogether. A smaller number of positive cases would have force against them. I incline to the belief that the Mediaeval builders followed partially the Saint's Day principle—perhaps invented it—and that a limited list of churches may conform to the idea. If John Leake's map, already mentioned, be really accurate, the various City churches dedicated to St Mary have approximately parallel axes, and this evidence, so far as it goes, would be confirmatory. That the explanation covers even the majority of instances is very doubtful. And, at most, it accounts only for the symbolism which produced variations of the axial line, and for the actual routine of the builders. The master reason for orientation, whether equinoctial or solstitial, is to be sought, as we have seen, in much more primitive times.

A modern theory, propounded by Herr H. Wehner, to account for discordant axes of buildings, is based upon the belief that the early Freemasons for centuries possessed, and kept secret, a knowledge of the polarity of the magnetic needle. Should it be ultimately proved that the builders employed the magnetic compass, it is urged that we shall have, in the case of dated churches, a key to the variation of the needle, and, conversely, for those churches whose date is unknown, a guide to

their age[1]. That other folk, besides the Freemasons, were acquainted with the compass, is indisputable. A commonly received opinion is, that the mariner's compass was introduced to Europe from China about the twelfth century, probably through the medium of the Arabs[2]. Strong evidence has, however, been produced to show that the instrument was discovered independently, or "re-discovered," in Europe. Among other writers who refer unequivocally to the compass is the Englishman, Alexander Neckham (died A.D. 1217), whose description of its properties, as given in two Latin treatises, is unmistakeable[3]. Hence, from the early thirteenth century, and perhaps much before that time, the compass may have been used. But were the builders cognizant of the declination of the needle, and did they make allowance for it? This is extremely improbable. Indeed, it is authoritatively stated that the variation with which we are familiar was discovered by Stephen Burrowes (A.D. 1525–84), when voyaging between the North Cape of Finmark and Vaigatch[4]. This voyage would give a date of about the year 1553. The determinations were afterwards made by Gillebrand, who was professor of geometry at Gresham College[5].

If, then, the compass had been employed by masons previous to A.D. 1553, we should have expected, from their ignorance of its declination, considerable diversities of alinement. For the changes in declination have been very remarkable. Particulars are available dating from the year 1580. In that year, the needle pointed 11° 15′ E.; in 1622, the angle was 6° E.; while in 1657, there was no declination. By the year 1692, a swing of 6° W. had been attained, this rose to 24° 41′ W. in 1818, from which time the variation has steadily diminished[6]. These figures

[1] *Geograph. Journal*, XXVII. 1906, p. 409.

[2] *Ency. Brit.*, 10th edition, art. "Compass." In the 11th edition, the European case is put more strongly.

[3] *Nature*, XIV. 1876, pp. 147–8. But the account given in the *Ency. Brit.*, *loc. cit.*, should be also read. It is contended that Mediaeval writers were accustomed to speak of a new contrivance as if it were already in common use.

[4] F. H. Butler, in *Ency. Brit.*, art. "Compass." The name is spelt "Borough" in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, where a life of the explorer is given.

[5] *Ency. Brit.*, *loc. cit.*

[6] *Nature*, XIII. 1876, pp. 523–4; *Ency. Brit.*, *loc. cit.* Cf. Prof. Ganot, *Physics*, tr. E. Atkinson, 12th edition, 1886, p. 631, where the figures are slightly different.

show that from 1580 to 1818 the needle has varied in London by so large an angle as 36° (approx.), and one may reasonably suppose that during the two or three centuries preceding there were similar alterations. The use of the compass, together with ignorance of its declination, would therefore supply a very prosaic explanation of differences in the axial line of churches.

One further attempt at solution may be mentioned. The Rev. J. Griffith, as the result of examinations of ancient megalithic monuments, has submitted that the stones were erected in such positions in order to give a three weeks' warning of the coming equinox or solstice (cf. p. 192 *supra*). Arguing from this assumption, and citing the alinements of churches in corroboration, he suggests that a similar interval of preparation was provided for in the orientation of some churches. As a rule—he refers evidently to Welsh examples—the older churches are found to be oriented for May and November, then come buildings alined for the equinox. "I find," he says, "N. 76° or 77° E., and N. 80° or 81° E., to be rather common orientations[1]." [These figures refer to azimuths; subtracting the number of degrees from 90°, we get the "amplitudes," 13° or 14° N. and 9° or 10° N., respectively. In other words, Mr Griffith found that many churches are alined at these angles North of East.] With these figures we may compare those of Hampshire, already given. The inference to be drawn from the Welsh churches is that the builders there commenced work at dates rather nearer the equinoxes than did their contemporaries of the South of England. Mr Griffith's interpretation gives us a theory within a theory, and requires much further study and observation before it can be accepted.

This chapter must not close without an allusion to those curious examples of churches in which the axes of nave and chancel do not correspond, but point to different points of the horizon. Such cases are often loosely described under the general term, "orientation," but either they really represent double orientations, or, as some contend, the buildings were purposely constructed with an angular twist. The subject is usually treated as if the problem merely concerned the chancel,

[1] J. Griffith, in *Nature*, LXXIX. 1908, p. 37.

consequently, in works on ecclesiology, and in the semi-popular language of architects and antiquaries, a church possessing the feature now under consideration is described as having a "weeping," "twisted," "deflected," or "skew chancel." Manifestly, these expressions beg the question, for, unless it can be proved that nave and chancel are of the same age, and that the Eastern limb was purposely deflected, or that it was deflected at some subsequent re-building, it is possible that the nave is the portion which has been mis-alined. Hence we might equally well speak of a "weeping nave." The matter is nevertheless unimportant, so long as we do not tacitly allow the popular term to hide the possibility of a re-building or a re-orienting of either limb of the church. By that one phrase, "weeping chancel," we might be led to credit the old builders with ideas of which they were utterly unconscious, just as

> "Learned commentators view
> In Homer more than Homer knew."

Glancing down the columns of a convenient note-book, one observes, as famous examples of deflected buildings, Lichfield cathedral, which leans to the North, and Canterbury, Ely, and York cathedrals, which incline to the South. Other cases of Northern deflection are Brent Pelham, Hertfordshire ("several degrees North of East"); St Michael's, Coventry; St Mary's, York; North Curry, Somerset; St Mary's, Bridlington, and Whitby Abbey[1].

The instances of deflections towards the South are much more numerous in this country. My list includes Bishopstone and Bosham, Sussex; St Mary's, Coventry; Holy Trinity, Stratford; Priory church, Tynemouth; West Malling, Kent; St Andrew's, Lammas, Norfolk (15°); Chipstead and Mickleham, Surrey, and many others. Further lists have been compiled from various sources, but, as the direction of the twist is not

[1] The references to these churches are very widely scattered, but many examples have been personally tested. See, among other references, Walcott, *Church and Conventual Arrangement*, pp. 61–2; *Handbook of Eng. Ecclesiology* (Eccles. Soc.), pp. 40–41; *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., Vols. X., XI. *passim*, 5th Ser., IV. p. 354, 7th Ser., I. and VII., 9th Ser., II.; *Bygone Hertfordshire*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p 154; Rev. A. W. Lawson, *Hist. of W. Malling Church*, 1904, p. 2, &c.

usually specified, it would serve no purpose to reproduce the whole catalogue.

Examples of unsymmetrical churches abound on the Continent, but the deflection of these is usually to the North. The Southern bend is not unknown, however, for it is found in the cathedral choirs of Geneva and Stuttgart. Some French chancels even, contrary to common belief, lean to the South. Speaking of the deflection of French churches, M. J. K. Huysmans, in his romance, *La Cathédrale*, says, "This twist in the church is to be seen almost everywhere—in St Jean at Poitiers, at Tours and at Reims[1]." M. de Caumont observed the Northerly deflection in more than a hundred churches of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the examples being widely scattered[2]. The deviation, in the case of Bayonne cathedral, is at once noticed by the visitor; Mr Baring-Gould claims this irregularity as the result of English domination and English architects[3].

Returning to our own churches, we find it necessary to clear the ground somewhat. On the one hand, we have the estimate given by the able editors of Durandus, to the effect that probably about one quarter of our English churches have a deflection, and that it is usually towards the South[4]. The present writer dare not hazard the opinion that the proportion is so high, but he feels convinced that the instances are too numerous to be explainable by chance. But consider an experience of an opposite kind. About a dozen years ago, Mr G. Watson, of Penrith, stated that he had examined the plans of nearly four hundred churches as shown on the Ordnance maps, and found either no deflection at all, or, at most, a trifling variation[5]. Precisely what constitutes a trifling variation we are not told, though it may be freely admitted that the angle is often very slight. Thus, Mr W. J. Maxton and myself found that the Lady Chapel of St Saviour's, Southwark, inclined but a degree or two East of the nave, yet surely, even this trivial

[1] J. K. Huysmans, *La Cathédrale*, 13th edition, 1898, p. 158.

[2] Walcott, *Church and Conventual Arrangement*, p. 62.

[3] S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Brittany*, 1901, p. 193.

[4] J. M. Neale and B. Webb, in the "Introductory Essay" to Durandus, *op. cit.* p. lxxxvii.

[5] G. Watson, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., II. p. 58.

deflection could have been avoided by the architect, had it been desired. It has been asserted, apparently with some reason, that York cathedral, already cited as a "leaning" edifice, has no deflection[1], and to this the reply has been given that the variation would be obvious on a good ground-plan[2]. There is no need to argue about these examples in detail, because there exist sufficient cases of undisputed deflection.

The "skew chancel" is not confined to one epoch. Yet it is submitted that we have no marked examples before A.D. 1200. The feature is most observable in churches of the time of Edward III. It is said to be doubtful whether any instance could be adduced from the Renaissance period of building; the apparent exception in the church St Mary Magdalen, Taunton, being of later date[3]. That the feature has a certain fixity is shown in the case of St Aldate, Oxford, where it exists in spite of the restoration made in 1863[4]. A late example of the "twisted" ground-plan, which is valueless as regards the present discussion, occurs in St Peter's of the Vatican. Here we have a deflection of some feet, due to an architect's blunder, when the Greek cross was formed into a Latin one by prolonging the nave[5].

Admitting, as we are compelled by the facts to admit, that there exist many undoubted examples of skew chancels, we next look for an interpretation. Two schools of thought, the symbolist and the rationalist, are soon encountered. The case presented by the rationalist group of authorities may be thus summarized; deflection is the result either of carelessness or of differences in the dates of building the nave and the chancel respectively. We will consider first the explanation involved in the question of dates. It is generally believed that the choir of a church was often consecrated as soon as it was completed, the consecration of the nave or vestibule being held over until that part of the building was, in turn, ready for use. For instance, as Mr Parker pointed out, the Norman choir and transepts of the earlier Westminster Abbey are known to have been consecrated

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., II. p. 150.
[2] *Ibid.* 9th Ser., II. p. 393.
[3] *Ibid.* 2nd Ser., X. p. 312.
[4] *Ibid.* 9th Ser., II. p. 58.
[5] *Ibid.* 9th Ser., II. p. 172.

in A.D. 1065, but the nave, if one were ever added, was probably not finished until the twelfth century. Separate alinements may, in such cases, have been set out, and slight errors have been made during the operation. Again, in some of the churches which show inharmonious alinements, the nave and the choir manifestly belong to different epochs, one or other portion having been rebuilt. The architect of the later period unconsciously took an orientation which deviated from the first axis, or, according to the alternative view, he was actually unable to make the axes correspond. If we assume that he employed a magnetic compass, there is a third possibility of error in the variation of that instrument. But all these hypothetical causes of miscalculation are removed if we attach weight to a simple suggestion which has been made by one or two writers. It is submitted that the axis of the nave or the choir, whichever portion was already standing, would probably be hidden from the mason's view, through the temporary blocking up of the chancel arch. This might render harmonious alinement a task of some difficulty[1]. It has been averred that every case of deflection occurs in a church which has been partially rebuilt; hence the lack of agreement. It is difficult to say whether this statement is absolutely correct, but it seems to be true in many instances. Even so, why are the misalinements practically confined to re-buildings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries?

Again, it is asserted that many cases of deflection were discovered only when, in modern times, the rood-screen was, for one reason or another, taken down. In such instances, it is argued, the mason would have his standard line concealed while setting out the new section of the building. But, as we shall shortly see, this fact about the rood-screen may be interpreted in another way. If we accept the Saint's Day theory, there remains the possibility of error due to the re-dedication, or plural dedication, of churches. The difference might then conceivably originate without any re-building of the fabric. Mr Airy cites the case of Clapham, Bedfordshire. A better known example, possibly, is found in Whitby Abbey. The building, as a whole, is dedicated to St Peter and St Hilda jointly—a

[1] *Ibid.* 7th Ser., VII. p. 333.

fact proved by the Abbey seal. St Peter's Day is on the 29th of June, and St Hilda's on the 25th of August[1]; it was therefore tentatively submitted that there have been two dedications for the existing building. At this point we are thrown back on the "two-period" theory, for the Abbey choir dates from the late twelfth century, while the nave, which is considered to be the deflected limb, belongs to the mid-fourteenth century. Yet why should the axis of the nave lie nine feet North of the choir line? Canon Atkinson, who carefully investigated this example, expressed the result thus: the axis of the nave diverges from true East and West by 14°·5, that of the choir by 9°·7. He adds this statement: "That it was planned so requires no elaborate proof[2]." The parish church of Whitby, St Mary's, which is hard by, and which belongs to the twelfth century, runs exactly parallel to the Abbey choir. Why, again, assuming the theory of separate dedications, should the nave be assigned to one saint, and the choir to another[3]?

This query leads us to consider, for a moment, the subject of dedication to two, or even three patron saints. Miss Frances Arnold-Forster, in her *Studies in Church Dedications*, suggests several reasons for "twofold ascriptions[4]." The two names may represent that of the founder and that of the patron saint. The Lady chapel or chancel may have been placed under the invocation of one patron, and the rest of the building under another. Or, the founder may have deliberately intended to have a dual dedication. Again, when a church was rebuilt and re-dedicated, a new name may have taken its place alongside the old; such re-naming is thought to have been of frequent occurrence, especially in Cornwall. Lastly, the double dedication may be due to the union and consolidation of two

[1] *Ibid.* 2nd Ser., XI. p. 34, 7th Ser., VII. p. 470.

[2] J. C. Atkinson, *Memorials of Old Whitby*, 1894, pp. 147–51.

[3] The Rev. Canon G. Austen, Rector of Whitby, in a letter to the author, 5th April, 1909, states that two feast days seem to have been commemorated in honour of St Hilda, one on 25th August, the supposed date of the translation of the relics from Glastonbury, and the other on 17th November. A fair was held by proclamation on the former date.

[4] On the question of re-dedications see F. Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications*, 1899, I. p. xi, II. pp. 396, 507, 509, 513.

parishes, as is the case with the large majority of our City churches.

Now, with respect to Whitby, we seem to have obtained a clue to the dedication difficulty, at least. The Rev. Canon G. Austen, Rector of Whitby, informs me that the Saxon Abbey was dedicated to St Peter alone. Though somewhat contrary to popular belief, it must be accepted as a proof that the ascription to St Hilda was a later addition. Let us suppose that St Hilda's name was introduced at one or other of the rebuildings of the Abbey; and let us assume that there was a second formal dedication. This admission does not, perforce, imply our acceptance of the Saint's Day theory as explaining the discordant alinements. Else we should expect to find many more cases of deflection among the churches with double dedications. Nor, again, does the fact of re-dedication necessarily support the notion that the builder was incapable of setting out a straight line. In short, the solution tendered enforces the very difficulties which it professes to dispel. If it can be clearly shown beyond dispute how the Mediaevalists obtained their axial line, then the theory that the misalinement is the result of re-dedication will have to be faced seriously. Until that time comes, the theory is little more than a fair surmise. As a slight contribution to the inquiry, and as a possible instance of the architect's incapacity, the case of Leatherhead parish church may be cited. Here the tower is deflected about 3′·6″ from the axis of the nave, while the nave diverges from the chancel. The church is dedicated to St Mary and St Nicholas, but whether there is further connection between the two facts is uncertain. It was a visit to this church which led Dr J. C. Cox to refer to "symbolic absurdity," and the "leaning-head" theory as being propounded by "ill-instructed persons." His own explanation of the divergences is twofold: the "endeavours to obtain the true East at differing periods of the year," and "the well-known carelessness of Mediaeval builders in following out a true square[1]."

We next consider the arguments of the symbolists. Several solutions are offered by these authorities, though there is no

[1] J. C. Cox, *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, pp. 167–8.

great divergence of fundamental ideas. The favourite explanation, as just hinted, is that Christ, while on the Cross, faced Westwards, and that His head leaned towards the left, or South side. Another school teaches that the inclination was to the North, and, as we have already seen, such Continental churches as have varying axes, are deflected towards that point. In roods, it may be noted, the head is usually made to fall towards the left[1]. The "leaning-head" theory was accepted by Dr Rock. M. Huysmans has evidently paid so much attention to this phase of the question that he may be again quoted. Describing the fine abbey church of Preuilly-sur-Claise, in Touraine, he declares that the builders gave life to the stones. In its serpentine line, in the perspective of its aisles, and the obliquity of its vaulting, the church gives an allegorical presentment of Our Lord on the Cross, and perpetuates "the never-to-be-forgotten moment between the 'Sitio' and the 'Consummatum est'[2]." M. Huysmans mentions, with reserve, the opinion of some writers, that the bent line occasionally represents the body of a saint instead of that of the Saviour; thus the curved axis of St Savin is supposed to be symbolical of the wheel which was the instrument of martyrdom of the saint[3].

There are not lacking authorities who, like Dr Cox, spurn these theories as idle fancies. "Symbolism!" exclaimed Welby Pugin, when viewing a twisted chancel in Leicestershire, "Pack of nonsense: it was because they didn't know how to build straight[4]." This summary verdict, told by a person who heard it delivered, may, however, be countered by an opinion in the opposite sense, uttered by the same architect, and equally well attested. Asked about the bend in the nave at Whitby Abbey, which has just been mentioned, Pugin declared that it signified that the debt of redemption had been paid; "for, after the Saviour had expired on the Cross, his head would naturally lean or incline to one side[5]." Which of Pugin's two opinions is the earlier cannot be ascertained, but even if antagonism to the

[1] Neale and Webb, *op. cit.* p. lxxxvii.

[2] *La Cathédrale*, pp. 108–9.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 108.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., x. p. 357. Cf. J. C. Cox, *Rambles in Surrey*, 1910, pp. 167–68.

[5] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., xi. p. 34.

"leaning head" theory were representative of his maturer judgement, he surely could not pretend that the deflection can always be ascribed to a blunder. Mr Parker himself, who advanced the theory that the twist might be due to the consecration of a building before its completion, admitted that many cases of deflection are incapable of a constructional explanation[1]. One may well ask whether the architects who reared our magnificent Gothic cathedrals, edifices whose every part, when untouched by the restorer, exhibits skill in design and workmanship, were really unable to build straight. What of the deflection at St Ouen, in the city of Rouen, a building which Fergusson enthusiastically declares was "beyond comparison the most beautiful and most perfect of the abbey edifices of France[2]?" And, coming to meaner structures, dare we say that a discrepancy of 5° or 10° is likely to be the result of mere carelessness? One might as reasonably argue that the existence of a "low side window," with its deviations of size, shape, and position, indicates a clumsy arrangement of fenestration.

Rebutting arguments against the "theory of error" may be urged on broad grounds. We have seen that in the greater number of instances, our undeflected buildings bear to the North of the equinoctial point, indicating, if we suppose a calendar alinement at sunrise, that work was begun either a little after the advent of spring, or, less probably, a little before the autumnal equinox. Consider, then, the case of a church of which one member is to be rebuilt. Under similar conditions of starting work, the assumed error in direction might be on either side of the axis. We might perhaps conclude that it would actually tend to be on the Northern side of that axis—a Northern deviation added to a Northern deviation—for, in spite of liturgical rules, a liking for summer orientations (North of East) appears to have been very common. But, not to press this probability, it is at least claimable that, on a balance of instances, the deflections, if due to clumsy workmanship, would range

[1] *Church and Conventual Arrangement*, p. 62.

[2] *Illus. Handbook of Architecture*, II. p. 691. The nave and chancel of Manorbier church, South Pembrokeshire, vary to the extent of 16° (*Reliquary*, XV. 1909, p. 197), but whether the difference is due to re-building is not known.

themselves in equal numbers North and South of the earlier alinement. But the fact remains that the Southern variations form the rule, and we are driven to the belief that they are Southern by reason of design.

This leads us to consider an hypothesis which embraces a purpose more aesthetic than symbolical. Put shortly, this hypothesis is, that the bend was designed to produce an artistic illusion—a perspective effect whereby a building appeared to be longer than it actually was. Thus, if one of the side walls of a church with a "weeping chancel" be viewed from the Western entrance, an impression of greater length and of undefined distance is received by the spectator. Again, where a rood screen exists, the bend in the wall, not a pleasing feature, considered separately, would be concealed, but a change in the direction in a lofty roof would still produce an illusion that the church is indefinitely extended. Moreover, as the beholder caught a glimpse of a portion of the sanctuary window, which was often richly ornamented, both in form and in colour, the beauty of the vista was much enhanced. On this hypothesis, the screen, instead of being the immediate cause of the inclined axis, was an accessory to a complete design, a feature of which the effect was foreseen and provided for. To round off this question, it should be added that not many relics of screen-work exist which belong to a period earlier than the fourteenth century. A few specimens of thirteenth century work remain, and doubtless others were swept away at the Reformation, but most of the examples which have come down to us are assignable to the fifteenth century[1]. In short, the middle stage of the development of rood-lofts seems to correspond roughly with the period in which deflection is most commonly observable. This coincidence does not, indeed, solve the riddle, since each of the opposing schools may produce it as testimony.

Seeing that the "aesthetic theory" is unsupported by documentary proof, evidence must be sought in the possible existence of similar contrivances associated with other architectural features. Can such evidence be produced? The reply is in the

[1] F. Bond, *Screens and Galleries in Eng. Churches*, 1908, pp. 87–94; J. T. Page, in *Curious Church Customs*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, pp. 168–170.

affirmative. As one enters certain Egyptian temples, he perceives a gradual transition from light to darkness. This effect is brought about by the forced ascent of a few steps, combined with a lowering of the roof; thus the sense of gloom and mystery increases as the worshipper moves forward[1]. Again, we find that, in the columns of the Parthenon and other Greek buildings, there is an entasis, or slight convexity of outline, perchance not more than the length of a finger nail, yet sufficient to prevent the appearance of hollowness. The Parthenon is said to possess scarcely a vertical or a horizontal line throughout the whole design. The columns lean a little inwards, the corners incline diagonally, the entablature is curved and recedes in the centre[2]. Such subtle niceties, trivial when taken singly, prove that, in Classical times at least, the aesthetic phase of architecture was not ignored. The next question is, Can parallel instances of design be observed in our own country? The Norman church of Barfreston, Kent, may be cited. In this building, the axes of the nave and chancel correspond, but the walls of the chancel are so built that this portion appears to incline about 5° North. One can hardly find a rectangle in the plan of the church—"everything is oblique[3]," and apparently oblique by intention. Again, the South arcade of the nave of Scarborough parish church has a distinct curve, as if deliberately thus planned. In the case of Whitby Abbey, before cited, Canon Atkinson discovered another intentional irregularity. The West wall of the North transept projects into the interior at least a foot more than does the East wall. The view, being thus interrupted by the broken line, has a pleasing effect upon the mind of the spectator. Consider, too, the churches, to be met with in many a village, in which the pillars and mouldings of the Northern arcade are simpler than those of the Southern, the Northern windows less rich in tracery, the specimens of painted glass more sombre in motive and execution. It will be understood that a reservation must be made for those churches in

[1] T. Ely, *Manual of Archaeology*, 1890, p. 17. [2] *Ibid.* p. 132.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., II. p. 256. Barfreston church has been thus described, "Quite a gem as a specimen of highly-enriched Norman work" (Sir S. R. Glynne, *Notes on the Churches of Kent*, 1877, p. 42).

which the South arcade is of slightly later date than the North. The symbolism of the Northern aspect of Nature must have been clearly appreciated for these conditions to have arisen (see p. 334 *infra*). Or, take the feature just alluded to as entasis, by which the optical illusion of hollowness in upright lines is corrected. Many of our spires exhibit this convexity. Mr Francis Bond, a high authority on such matters, states that the entasis probably does not exceed 1 inch for 60 feet in our best examples of Gothic spires. The important point to notice is, that the curvature exists as the result of design. True, it has been mooted whether the bulging is not an incidental consequence of a peculiar method of building, but this idea is not commonly accepted, nor does it seem to satisfy the conditions of the problem. Sometimes, as in the Lincolnshire spires of Caythorpe and Welbourn, and of Glinton (Northants), the limit just given is greatly exceeded, with results not at all pleasing to the eye[1]. Caythorpe spire, once grotesque with its "sugar loaf" protuberance, exhibits the familiar curve even after being shortened and rebuilt[2]. That there appears to be an artistic necessity for the convex treatment, or for some equivalent device, is exemplified once more in the steeple at Louth. There, the impression of concavity is prevented by increasing the projection of the crockets about one-third of the way up the spire[3]. Again, there is the artistic disposition and gradation of ornament, the delicate, enriched carvings being reserved for the parts of the building near the eye, while a "greater effective quantity" is provided in the upper parts, as on pinnacles and parapets. Perhaps the reader will admit that there is no need to press further the plea of aesthetic artifices on the part of the early builders. It is, at least, conceivable that our English masons understood the value and charm of subtle suggestions of spaciousness and mystery. To elaborate their art, and to conceal it, and to keep

> "This modest charm of not too much,
> Part seen, imagined part,"

[1] Bond, *Gothic Arch. in England*, p. 632 and note.
[2] Murray, *Handbook for Lincs.*, 2nd edition, 1903, p. 23.
[3] *Gothic Arch. in England*, p. 632.

may well have been one of the golden rules of the Gothic architect. For the trained eyes of the sympathetic beholder admire "both what they half create, and half perceive," and they will find privileged pleasures in sublimities of form and colour.

Nevertheless, in the absence of positive testimony that our early builders were actuated by artistic principles such as those just described, there is no justification for putting the case a whit more strongly. Is there, indeed, any evidence at all for the intentional designing of deflected churches? St Charles Borromeo (A.D. 1538–1584) has been cited as recommending deflection towards the South, if deflection be necessary[1]. The reference is probably the result of misunderstanding St Charles's meaning, and, in that case, the claim is vitiated. What the writer actually required was, that the High Chapel (cappella) should look directly East, equinoctial East. Should dwellings exist which obscured the view, that fact did not relieve the builder of his responsibility. If the axis of the building must be turned, it should be towards the South, and not towards the North. The passage seems to allude to the church as a whole, not to the High Chapel, but I admit that there is some little ambiguity[2].

Attention has been drawn by Mr W. F. Hobson to an early allusion to orientation, involving, as he considers, the principle of deflection also. The passage occurs in the writings of St Paulinus of Nola, c. A.D. 420. Speaking of a church which he had built, St Paulinus remarks, "*Prospectus basilicae vero non, ut usitatior mos est, Orientem spectat, sed ad Domini mei B. Felicis basilicam pertinent Memoriam ejus aspiciens*[3]." The statement is that the outlook of the church was not directed towards the

[1] *Church and Conventual Arrangement*, p. 136.

[2] St Charles Borromeo, *Instructions on Eccles. Building*, ed. G. J. Wigley, 1857, p. 22. Cf. Latin edition of M. L'Abbé Van Drival, 1855, p. 35. St Charles's actual words are: "Tuncque id saltem curetur, ut ne ad septentrionem, sed ad meridiem versus si fieri potest, plane spectet."

[3] The circumstances connected with the building of this church are described by H. D. M. Spence (Dean of Gloucester) in *Early Christianity and Paganism*, 1902, pp. 485–8. The passage quoted occurs in the "Epistulae" of St Paulinus de Nola, Ep. XXXII. (*ad Severum*), § 13. One edition inserts "id est, tumulum" after "memoriam," and Gulielmus de Hartel's edition, 1894, gives "perspectus" as an alternative to "prospectus."

East, following the more common practice, but towards a certain basilica, containing a particular tomb, that of the martyred presbyter, St Felix. That we have here an early instance of orientation is manifest, but whether "*aspiciens*" may be interpreted so as to prove deflection is doubtful. It is, however, possible that while the church had its general alinement to the sacred basilica, there was a bend or slant which caused the "chancel"—speaking conventionally—to face the monument. Mr Hobson urges that, from orientation towards a tomb and orientation for a Saint's Day there is but a slight transition[1].

We will now attempt to sum up the evidence. Skew chancels were, in some cases at least, due to carelessness or unskilfulness. A few deflections seem to have been caused by the architect's dislike to build on old foundations—a prejudice felt by Wren in re-building St Paul's. The Saint's Day theory may hold for some examples, since a few positive instances of observance, if these can be produced, cannot be nullified even by many negative exceptions. As to the symbolism of the leaning head, whimsical though it may at first sight appear, one cannot dismiss it as mere folly. Mediaeval symbolism was no dead art, and it is visible in many guises, though to a less extent than its advocates would insist. Unless, therefore, we are to believe that symbolical explanation is altogether an after-thought—the creation of cultured ecclesiastics—we have to find a reason for its existence in Mediaeval days. And, if the idea be so old as the foundation of our finest churches, we may conjecture that it received an embodiment in architecture. Lastly, the theory of artistic design, though least advocated, seems most in consonance with all the facts. The deflection does cause an agreeable optical illusion; and it is probable that this was intended. While we search in vain for some early document to throw a glimmering of light on the problem, we are bound to consider all tentative solutions unsatisfactory. He would be a bold man who should unhesitatingly affirm that one explanation will meet every case, and hardier still would be the prosaic architect who should dismiss every instance of deflection as the result of pure chance or blundering ignorance.

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VII. p. 334.

CHAPTER VI

THE ORIENTATION OF GRAVES

WHEN the roaming antiquary stops to watch the sexton dig a grave, he observes, not for the first time doubtless, that the graves all lie East and West. To the person whose tastes are not antiquarian, the matter is quite commonplace and he seldom gives it further thought. Yet, so firmly is the custom fixed as a popular institution, and so unconsciously is it obeyed, that it is only when it is perforce disregarded, in crowded cemetery or churchyard, that one's feelings receive a slight shock by reason of the irregularity. Now these unconscious observances carry with them their certificate of age. For, as John Brand, in the opening words of his famous book, well declares, concerning such "vulgar rites": "The strongest proof of their remote antiquity is that they have outlived the general knowledge of the very causes that gave rise to them."

Perhaps there is a little danger of a misunderstanding: it should be made clear that it is only in modern times that folk have become unable to give any reason whatever for the custom. The earlier churchmen had an explanation to tender, though, as we shall see, it was only of secondary and derivative rank. Further, the rule was, and indeed still is, more precise in its operation than above stated, for the head of the corpse is directed towards the West and the feet towards the East. In other words, the normal disposition of the corpse, according to the ancient teaching of the Church, is that it shall face the East.

Durandus, who has already been frequently cited, states the rule, and gives as a reason that the Eastward position is

properly assumed in prayer[1]. Bede explains the arrangement on the supposition that the Coming of the Great Day and of the "Sun of Righteousness" will be seen from the East, hence the dead should face the sunrise[2]. The Scriptural allusion in Zechariah, too, has often been quoted in support of the practice; the feet of the Messiah, so the verse runs, shall "stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the East[3]." Larousse, to mention but one more writer, refers to the injunction, but adds that the bodies of priests, martyrs, and bishops are laid in a reverse direction—"*caput versus altare*," so that they face the West. A curious reason is assigned: churchmen of high or clerical rank are expected to rise first, and to pass onwards with the head looking West[4], a strange contradiction of Bede's hypothesis.

Since the effective force of a rule is tested by its exceptions, we shall now glance at some breaches of conformity. With such transgressions of custom one might profitably compare the deliberate refusal to orient churches, discussed in the preceding chapter. Thus, in John Aubrey's *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, we are assured that most of the ancient graves at Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire, were made to lie North and South. Whether this were due to ignorance or to the spirit of opposition, the author of the statement, Dr White Kennett, was unable to say. In one of the rare and anonymous "Marprelate" tracts (A.D. 1589), now familiar to most students through Professor Arber's admirable "English Scholar's Library," we read that Martin Month "would not be laid East and West (for hee ever went against the haire) but North and South: I think," adds the tractarian, "because '*ab aquilone omne malum*,' and the South wind ever brings corruption with it[5]." Martin Month has not

[1] Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, L. vii. ch. 37.

[2] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 80.

[3] Zech. xiv. 4. [4] Larousse, *Grand Dict. Universel*, Art. "Orientation."

[5] *Martin Months Minde*, orig. edition, 1589 (the tract is not paginated). Cf. E. Arber, *Introd. sketch to the Martin Marprelate controversy*, 1880. (Eng. Scholar's Lib., No. 8.) The nickname of the imaginary schismatic is obviously taken from the "Month's Mind"—a commemorative service which was held on a day one month from the date of the death of the person. The authorship and genesis of the tracts are discussed in W. Pierce's *Hist. Introduction to the Marprelate tracts*, 1908. For *Martin Months Minde*, see pp. 229, 328 of that work.

lacked followers. Mr Hissey, in his *Over Fen and Wold*, has recorded a seventeenth century example from Lincolnshire, a stronghold of Puritanism[1]. William Glanville, who died at Wotton, near Dorking, in the year 1750, left documentary injunctions requiring, among other curious details, that he should be buried facing the North. In a case of infringement of the rule, as related by Brand, the motive, strangely enough, was not contumacy, but the desire to exhibit a visible mark of penitence and humiliation[2]. In support of this view, attention may be called to a stone coffin which is built into an exterior angle of two walls at Lindisfarne Priory church. The coffin lies South-East and North-West, and is believed to have held the body of a monk who had broken his vows.

Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, as befitted a philosopher, ordered that his executors should determine the true orientation of his grave by means of a compass (A.D. 1735). This was done, with the result that the monument appeared to be awry, though the actual error, it is affirmed, lay in the incorrect orientation of the surrounding graves[3]. One is inclined to modify this explanation; the divergence was probably caused by the different modes of orientation, the earlier graves having been most probably alined by the sun or the church fabric, while that of the antiquary was set out by the needle, and, it may be, without making allowance for the declination. In a parenthesis, an analogous case, which came under the notice of the present writer, may be given. An oblong kerbing of marble was to be placed around a grave in the churchyard of Chipstead, Surrey, and the mason was told to take his alinement from the wall of the chancel. When the task was finished the kerbing was seen to be out of line with the surrounding graves. Dispute was followed by a careful test. The kerb was true to the chancel wall, but, as was then discovered, the chancel itself was askew, when compared with the nave. Was the twist, then, of a date posterior to that of the earliest grave-mounds, and were these made parallel with the nave? I think the answer to the latter question is probably affirmative, but the puzzle of dates cannot be so readily solved. It is almost

[1] J. J. Hissey, *Over Fen and Wold*, 1898, p. 399.
[2] *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 295.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 295.

certain that none of the existing mounds is co-eval with the rebuilding or partial rebuilding of the chancel[1], but again, the present mounds may have been alined from a succession of earlier ones.

As already suggested, direct infraction of the general rule arrests the attention; were it not for this, familiarity might make us blind. So again, one may easily pass by at least two Shakespearean allusions. "Make her grave straight," says one sexton to the other, when about to dig Ophelia's grave[2], and, though certain commentators have considered the words to imply "Make it immediately," there is good authority against this interpretation. The alternative reading supposes that the command is to dig the grave East and West. This rendering of the words seems very reasonable, seeing that they form part of an answer to the question whether Ophelia shall have Christian burial. "I tell thee she is: and therefore make her grave straight." The explanation is in full accord with the tradition, held in the South-East of England, that the bodies of suicides were buried in a North and South direction. The instruction given by Guiderius to Cadwal concerning the apparently dead body of Imogen is more specific:

> "Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to the East;
> My father hath a reason for't[3]."

The meaning probably is, "Lay his head to face the East"; although the other interpretation, "Head directed to East, feet to West," is possible. At any rate the passage clearly shows that the orientation of graves was assumed by the poet to have been observed, even in the solitudes.

A scrap of quaint, but illuminating, evidence comes from the folk-lore of Wales, where the East wind is called "the wind of the dead men's feet[4]." Nor is the practice of orienting graves confined to Britain. A Scandinavian folk-story makes the grave-diggers, either through stress of bad weather, or "out of mischief," bury an unpopular person, one Jón Flak, in a grave

[1] Mr P. M. Johnston gives these dates: nave, *c.* A.D. 1175; chancel, *c.* A.D. 1200–20.

[2] *Hamlet*, Act v. Sc. 1. [3] *Cymbeline*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

[4] E. Howlett, in *Curious Church Customs*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p. 136.

dug North and South. Every night the dead man haunted the grave-diggers and repeated this verse:

"Cold's the mould at choir-back,
Cowers beneath it Jón Flak,
Other men lie East and West,
Every one but Jón Flak,
Every one but Jón Flak."

And no rest was obtained until the body was taken up and buried in the proper position[1]. A study of comparative customs will, however, furnish us with departures from the British plan, although haphazard alinements seem to be exceptional. Thus, some Australian tribes allow the head to front the West, others the East. The Samoans, the Fijians, and the North American Indians place the head to the East; this was also the practice of the Peruvians. Some South American tribes and the old Ainus of Yesso made their dead face the sunrise[2]. Plainly, while all these instances involve alinement of the corpse, they illustrate the two opposing ideas mentioned in the last chapter,—that of darkness and death, connected with sunset, and that of resurrection and new life, typified by sunrise. Sir Thomas Browne, in his *Hydriotaphia*, remarks: "The Persians lay North and South: the Megarians and Phoenicians placed their heads to the East; the Athenians, some think, towards the West, which Christians still retain. And Beda will have it to be the posture of our Saviour[3]."

Various Greek authors attest the practice of orienting graves before the time of Solon (died *c.* B.C. 558)[4]. Setting this evidence aside, and restricting the inquiry chiefly to our own country, we have good reason to believe that there has been continuity of custom from the Saxon period at least. Mr Romilly Allen asserts that the East-to-West position was usual in the early days of Christianity. Further it was formerly suggested by Mr Reginald A. Smith that, wherever East-to-West graves are met with in Saxon cemeteries, they indicate the burial-places of Christians, in contrast to the tombs of the heathen. But the discoveries at Mitcham, in Surrey, of a large number of

[1] W. A. Craigie, *Scandinavian Folk-Lore*, 1896, p. 301.

[2] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, II. pp. 422–3.

[3] Sir T. Browne, *Hydriotaphia*, c. iii.; "Works," ed. S. Wilkin, 1884, III. p. 30.

[4] *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 318.

skeletons carefully orientated, break the rule, since Mr Smith himself shows that the burials were of pre-Saxon date, while the associated relics point to pagan interment. Again, a cemetery which was discovered at the Roman "level" in Bishopsgate Street, London, contained bodies laid East and West. Since no pagan objects were associated with the skeletons, we may perhaps conjecture that the burials were those of Christians[1]. But the most common position of skeletons in Roman cemeteries, according to Wright, is found to be East and West; usually, though by no means always, the feet are towards the East[2]. This generalization must now be considered too confident. There is the further complication that some of the cemeteries contain burnt, as well as unburnt bodies, suggesting a mingling of pagan and Christian burials.

We next take the pre-Roman period. Two examples from France will serve to illustrate one stage. A cemetery at Charvais, belonging to the earliest Iron Age, contained more than seventy graves, all but two or three of which were so oriented that the head lay at the West end[3]. Out of five graves excavated at Pleurs, in the department of Marne, three exhibited a like arrangement[4]. Examples might be multiplied, so far as the Continent is concerned; the position of the skeleton in English interments of the Iron Age unfortunately seems not to have been much noted by investigators. Even the excellent *Guide to the Antiquities of the Early Iron Age* does not furnish much information about British orientation, the main cause, doubtless, being the neglect of the excavators to record such details. One remarkable interment, at Kilham, near Driffield, in the East Riding, is worthy of notice. The grave contained the remains of a man, with the head placed at the West end; on each side of the body a goat had been laid, with a similar orientation[5].

[1] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.* XLI. p. 53; cf. J. Romilly Allen, *Monumental Hist. of the Early Brit. Church*, 1889, p. 65 (concerning early Christian graves). R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. Herts.*, I. 1902, p. 258. Cf. the same writer in *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.*, XXI. pp. 26–32.

[2] T. Wright, *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 2nd edition, 1861, p. 318. Cf. R. A. Smith, in *Vict. Hist. of London*, I. 1909, pp. 12 et seqq.

[3] R. A. Smith, *Guide to Early Iron Age*, 1905, p. 60.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 64.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 112.

Mr J. R. Mortimer, who, in 1897, conducted a series of excavations at Kilham, gave this summary respecting the disposition of the skeletons. Of twenty burials, eleven bodies had the head towards the North, five towards the South, and only four West[1]. At the Late-Celtic cemetery at Harlyn Bay, Cornwall, the majority of the skeletons, which were contracted, lay on their left sides, and faced the East. This evidence, which might be supplemented, plainly shows that the placing of corpses East and West was not uniformly observed during the Early Iron Age.

But we must widen the scope of the inquiry, for it is necessary to remember that the round barrows of the Bronze and Aeneolithic periods, and the long barrows of the Neolithic Age, were nothing but huge graves. Mr Mortimer's excavations in the round barrows of Yorkshire led him to the conclusion, that, while no rule could be formulated concerning the alinement of the body, "the most prevalent position of the head [was] to the West and the East[2]." Canon Greenwell's explorations revealed a like absence of regularity in the position of round-barrow skeletons, though the tables which he furnishes indicate a tendency to an East-and-West approximation. One of his results is of great interest. He found that, wherever the head of the skeleton pointed, roughly speaking, towards the West, the body had generally been laid on its right side; where the head was towards the East, the body was usually resting on its left side[3]. The inference has therefore been drawn that the corpse was made to face, not merely the sun, but the position of the sun in the sky at the time of burial. This opinion has been widely held until recent years, but it is now becoming customary to heap ridicule upon it[4]. The scoffers should, however, in fairness, consider collateral testimony.

First, it is well to note an actual record of careful orientations. For example, it is not contested that, in the round barrows of

[1] *Ibid.* p. 112. On the contrary, "Lake-Dwelling cemeteries," in Switzerland, examined by Professor F. Forel, 1905–9, and ascribed to the Bronze Age, showed no orientation of the skeletons. (*Man*, IX. 1909, No. 92.)

[2] J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, 1905, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii.

[3] W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, p. 26; R. A. Smith, *Vict. Hist. Herts.*, I. 1902, p. 258.

[4] See, for example, *Naturalist*, 1909, p. 274.

Wiltshire there is a strong tendency for the body to face the South[1]. If the theory just mentioned be correct, the corpse had, in the Wiltshire graves, been placed with the face towards the midday sun, implying a possible, but not demonstrable intention, with some fixity of custom. General Pitt-Rivers, who believed that the Saxons arranged the body with the head towards the rising sun, examined 31 Saxon graves at Winkelbury. He discovered that, while the skeleton was always alined towards an Eastern point, the exact axis varied from E. 19° S. to E. 28° N., but was usually towards the North. Supposing that his theory were valid, he admitted, with great candour, that all but two of the bodies must, from their positions, have been buried in summer. Here, again, we meet a possible, but certainly not provable, adherence to a custom.

Let us now look at Mr Mortimer's valuable tables, which are found on the page of his book to which reference has just been made. From an examination of 383 interments, Mr Mortimer obtained these results:

Bodies lying on the right side	178
„ „ „ left side	103
„ „ „ back	68
„ „ „ chest	3
Position not known	31

The 31 unascertained positions must be ignored. The 71 instances in which the body lay on its back or chest are obviously testimony against the "face-to-sun" hypothesis. Moreover, of the 281 remaining cases, only 61 will be found to have the head pointing North-East, South-East, or in intermediate directions. At first sight, this summary is fatal to the theory. But the question is not easily settled. Other details must be known

[1] T. Rice Holmes, *Anc. Brit. and the Invas. of Julius Caesar*, 1907, p. 188. Dr Holmes has thoroughly sifted the evidence, and his generalizations deserve to be carefully read. See also C. H. Read, *Guide to the Bronze Age*, Brit. Mus. 1904, p. 55. On p. 46, Dr Read describes urn-burials, without existing mounds, near Ashford, Middlesex. The urns were arranged in straight lines, East to West, or in crescents facing East. For Saxon graves, see *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II. pp. 260–1. In the Jutish cemetery at Droxford, Hants, the skeletons lay towards all points of the compass. (J. Vaughan, *Lighter Studies of a Country Rector*, 1909, p. 138.)

concerning each individual interment, and these are, to some extent, lacking. It is evident that a corpse may occupy any one of numerous linear positions, and may lie on either its right or left side, and yet face the sun at some time of the day. For the sun constantly changes its position in the course of its daily journey, and also alters its points of rising and setting. The consequence is, that a body lying on its left side might have its head directed to any point from North-East round to North-West approximately, and nevertheless face the sun. If we do not know the season, or the hour, of the interment, we cannot assert that the corpse did not so face the sun. Similarly, if the deceased tribesman were placed on his right side, he might, broadly speaking, occupy any position from East round to West, and yet fulfil the condition. Now the tables show that 245 out of the 281 bodies might conceivably have been laid as the theory supposes. Mr Mortimer gives Greenwell's list for comparison: it supplies details of 234 bodies. Of these bodies, 112 lay on the right side, and 122 on the left—there is no reference to other positions. An inspection of the columns reveals that about 200 cases might support the "face-to-sun" theory.

It would be highly undesirable to press the facts further than is necessary to appeal for a suspended verdict. The "face-to-sun" hypothesis was never meant to be more than a possible explanation, but it has the virtue of accounting for many instances in which the skeleton lies, not due East and West, or North and South, but obliquely, at some intermediate horizon. And, at least, the alinement of the head, if not the face, towards the sun, is not peculiarly a British feature of prehistoric burials. Among the Tlingits, or Tlinkits, of South Alaska, the corpse was buried with the head towards the sun, so as to allow the soul of the deceased person to return; if the body were laid in the contrary direction, the spirit could never come back. Professor Frazer, who records this custom, asserts that other totemistic peoples inter their dead, according to fixed rules, with the head towards particular points of the compass. Professor E. B. Tylor has also collected abundant testimony corroborative of such customs. In places widely sundered geographically there has existed a strong desire to bury the dead "in the path of the

sun[1]." Recently, too, Dr A. W. Howitt has discovered, just in time, at the Australian station of Wotjo, an isolated tribe which still preserves the custom. The arrangement of the head of the corpse is determined by the class and totem of the deceased person, and the direction is fixed by reference to the rising sun. The practice is nearing extinction, for, although Dr Howitt was able to secure sufficient information from the natives to construct a kind of burial compass, they could give him no reason for the varying dispositions. The only explanation proffered was: "Oh, that is what our fathers told us." Such a man was buried in such a way because he was "nearer to us" than the others[2]. The folk-memory of this tribe will soon become a mere echo of tradition, and the task of reconstructing these primitive burial customs will grow increasingly difficult as each aboriginal patch of the earth's surface becomes influenced by civilization.

Respecting graves themselves, we readily perceive that a round barrow, from its very nature, cannot be normally oriented. But in the British long barrows, usually accepted as the earlier kind, the long axis generally runs East and West. The broader end of the mound, where the sepulchral deposit is, as a rule, discovered, is directed towards the East[3]. So that, during the Neolithic period, some broad principle of orientation was observed, the constraining motive being probably connected with sun-worship.

Orientation in barrow burials having been considered, one is easily led to discuss an allied subject, in part connected with interments, in part not so strictly related, yet tinged with like primitive ideas. This topic is the orientation of megaliths and ancient earthworks, and it has been so prominently put forward by Sir Norman Lockyer that no archaeologist can pretend to be alert and watchful who has not, to some extent, followed the discussion. Hence a notice, however slight and imperfect, is demanded. Sir Norman Lockyer has made careful triangulations and measurements in connection with the prehistoric

[1] J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 1910, III. pp. 274–5; *Prim. Culture*, II. pp. 422–3.

[2] A. W. Howitt, *The Native Tribes of Australia*, 1904, pp. 453–5.

[3] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 16; T. Rice Holmes, *op. cit.* p. 103.

monuments of Cornwall, Wiltshire, and other counties, and his general conclusion is, that the axes of these monuments, and their mutual geographical relations, were carefully determined by their constructors. The assumption having been made that the monuments were originally alined to sunrise, the problem has been to calculate when that arrangement could have existed, because now, owing to the alteration of the inclination of the earth's equator with regard to the ecliptic, the solstitial points have considerably shifted their positions. Stonehenge, which Sir Norman Lockyer considers to have been a solstitial temple, was accurately alined by astronomical means when erected. He believes that the original alinement of the circles was adapted (*c.* B.C. 2200) to a "farmer's year," May to November; but that, about B.C. 1600, a new cult was introduced, probably from Egypt, and the lines of orientation were changed to harmonize with a June-to-December year[1]. The investigation has also been applied to other monuments, and it is claimed that not only can we determine to what star a particular megalith was originally oriented, but, as a consequence of this determination, we can discover the approximate date also of the erection of the stones[2]. To any one who, like the present writer, is not a skilled practical astronomer, the evidence is difficult to handle, for the actual observations and measurements must, of necessity, be implicitly accepted. Yet, on general grounds, one cannot avoid the thought that the assumptions are not self-evidently true, and that even if this were the case, the theory is pushed much further than seems reasonable. These objections have been raised by several writers, and the views of Sir Norman Lockyer have been exposed to severe, and, apparently, disintegrating criticism[3]. It

[1] Sir J. Norman Lockyer, *Stonehenge, and other British Monuments*, 1906, pp. 320 et seqq. This inquiry was to some extent anticipated by Prof. W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Stonehenge*, 1880, pp. 18–20 (discussion on the alinement of that monument to the Midsummer sunrise). The question of earthwork orientation is also referred to by A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England*, 1908, pp. 337, 564, 589, &c.

[2] See Sir J. N. Lockyer's contributions to *Nature*, LXXIX., LXXX. passim.

[3] Sir J. N. Lockyer's theories have been adversely criticized by T. Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain*, pp. 472–82; by C. W. Dymond, in *Antiquary*, N.S., IV. pp. 447–9; *Edinburgh Review*, CLXXX. 1894, pp. 418–432; A. R. Hinks in *Nineteenth Century*, LIII. 1903, pp. 1002–9. Among papers upholding the theory, see J. Griffith, in *Nature*, LXXIX. pp. 36–7; LXXX. pp. 69–72; J. Gray, in *Nature*, LXXIX. pp. 236–8. Mr Gray

is but fair to add that these rebutting arguments have been met by rejoinders, though of varying value. Do we urge that the theory, with the minute measurements which it involves, presupposes too high a state of culture for those early times, too deep a knowledge of astronomy, too complicated a system of religion or worship? We are met by the enunciation of another hypothesis, that the Druids of Caesar's time, admittedly men of some learning, were the descendants of astronomer-priests of a more ancient British civilization[1]. Do we ask for proof of re-orientation, as a result of the immigration of a new race of men? We are thrown back on a further series of intricate astronomical data, reinforced by similar details relating to Egyptian temples. It may be that the objector has some misgivings as to the exactitude of the orientation of these very temples—that is a small matter—but he would like to know the reason for placing our rough, unhewn cromlechs and menhirs in the same category. To the general archaeologist, the comparison between our rude "amorpholiths" and an elaborate Eastern temple is not just. Such a person asks questions about the instruments which the builders of the megaliths may have used in their observations, about the possible obstacles which may have blocked out of view portions of the horizon, about the difficulty in ascertaining which standard line was used, where all the monoliths are so crude and irregular. Again, which was considered the time of sunrise—the moment when the sun's rim peeped above the horizon, or when his centre was clearly visible? Each position has been assumed, the one in England, the other in Egypt. In the ages when not even the Julian calendar had been invented, could primitive folk know, for certain, the exact date of the solstice? In England, the sun rises on the slant: where was the observer's eye placed in relation to that oblique line? In one Cornish instance, at least, it has been asserted that the stones from which the alinement had

thinks that our stone circles were raised by a race which came from Asia during the Bronze Age—probably that of Akkadian type. See also A. L. Lewis, in *Jour. Royal Anthrop. Inst.*, XXIX. 1909, pp. 517–29, dealing with Irish Cromlechs; E. Plunket, in *Nineteenth Century*, 1911, pp. 1036–53.

[1] Sir J. N. Lockyer, article in *Times*, 30th July, 1906.

been taken cannot be seen from the central group of stones[1]. And of Sidbury Hill, which was deemed so important in the Stonehenge measurements, Dr T. Rice Holmes declares that it cannot be seen from that monument, only the trees on its summit being visible[2].

Somewhat in accord with the conclusions of Sir Norman Lockyer, but by no means in total agreement, are the theories propounded by the Rev. J. W. Hayes, of West Thurrock. Mr Hayes, who has made a close study of stone-circles, especially with regard to their use in Gorseddau and other assemblies, has kindly permitted me to read his unpublished papers, and to glean therefrom such information as is germane to the present question. It is manifestly impossible to give more than the briefest summary of the evidence, or to enumerate the miscellaneous documents, written and printed, which Mr Hayes has consulted. The leading idea is, that the stone-circles were first erected to serve as indicators of seasons. By means of these "dials," the priestly caste determined the times of fasts and feasts. In spring, there were sacrifices to ensure bountiful crops. Before entering upon a war, there were offerings to propitiate the gods and thus to win success. A comparison is made between the old festivals and our own Easter—itself a pagan feast originally, and still depending on the moon for the exact date of its observance. Analogies are also drawn from the customs of the Jews, the Romans, and the Egyptians. The outstanding menhirs connected with stone-circles are considered to have been intended to provide sight-lines, while the trilithons of Stonehenge, it is suggested, marked out sky-spaces. It is interesting to note, in passing, that Professor W. Gowland has recorded the use of wooden trilithons by modern Japanese sun-worshippers, for determining the position of the sun and of sacred objects.

It will be inferred that Mr Hayes's theory makes the sacrificial use of the circles subsidiary to a primary astronomical and judicial purpose. Yet he takes note that the old Irish name for a cromlech—the accepted term among modern

[1] C. W. Dymond, in *Antiquary*, N.S., IV. pp. 447-9.

[2] T. Rice Holmes, *op. cit.* p. 473.

writers for a "stone-ring"—was *siorcal leacht*, or "circle-stone-of-death." In old Irish manuscripts such circles are always associated with pagan priests or druids. The sepulchral aspect of stone-circles, however, seems to be largely ignored by the modern school of investigators.

Mr Hayes lays stress upon a singular fact, the true explanation of which has long been an enigma—the frequent occurrence of a definite number of pillars in the stone-ring. Nine is not an uncommon number in England, though it is recorded from Ireland and Germany. (The stones of the Nine Maidens, near St Columb Major, in Cornwall, form a row, not a circle.) The cromlechs of Boscawen-ûn and the Dawns Mên, in Cornwall, of Whitemoorstone Down, Dartmoor, as well as the inner "horse-shoe" at Stonehenge, have nineteen uprights. Thirty, again, is the tale of some circles, as in the outer ring of sarsens at Stonehenge. The group of nine is puzzling, but the arrangement of nineteen is held to represent the metonic, Indian, or lunar cycle of the astronomers. After the lapse of nineteen years, the sun and moon occupy relatively the same positions as at the commencement of the cycle, so that full moon and new moon recur on the same days of the months as before. Whether this astronomical explanation of the number nineteen can be proved or not, one curious feature deserves notice. The circles which show nineteen stones have a gap towards the East, and no explorations have hitherto brought a twentieth stone to light.

It further appears that the old Gorsedd circles (p. 98 *supra*) consisted of twelve stones, set 30° apart, and said to represent the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The circles reared at the annual Eisteddfod by the neo-Druidic cult are arranged similarly. Besides the twelve pillars, three outstanding menhirs were fixed at the North-East, East, and South-East respectively so that the sun's rays at the solstices, or the equinoxes, as might be, fell on the central stone, or "chair" within the circle. And, by a strange coincidence—or is it due to imitation?—another plan of the Gorsedd circle, as preserved in ancient manuscripts, gives nineteen stones, with a gap towards the East. In this case, eight outstanding pillars were erected, so as to indicate, by shadows or rays, (1) the summer and winter solstices, (2) the

old May-December agricultural year, (3) the equinoxes, and, possibly, (4) other solar and lunar periods.

The weakness in the foregoing theories seems to lie in the assumption, up to the present unproved, that the primary purpose of the cromlechs was to serve as places of assembly. True, the convocations are supposed to have been hedged with much ceremony, to which the stones were accessory. But, dealing with circles, are we not liable to argue in a circle? Until the prime purpose of the cromlechs is ascertained, the student is forced back like the turnspit in *Hudibras*:

> "And still he's in the selfsame place
> Where, at his setting out, he was."

Were the stone-rings first erected for worship, and did the later conveners of Gorseddau, retaining faint memories of ancient usages, cling to the traditional system of orientation and astronomical measurement? Or were the cromlechs primarily intended for open-air meetings, which were afterwards invested by the priests with a religious character? Or, again, were the circles first of all astronomical, and the assemblies, features of later times? Minor theories may be neglected, although, in the present condition of the evidence, even these might claim recognition.

Setting aside the modern Druidical ceremonies, as having a parentage no older than the sixteenth or seventeenth century, there remain the more ancient Gorseddau. The evidence regarding these, for the past 1500 years, notably with respect to the practice of orientation and the use of "pointers" to indicate the seasons, is weighty, and cannot be ignored by the impartial student. But the grand difficulty remains. We cannot yet bridge over the interval between oral tradition and written history, between the builders of the Bronze and Early Iron Ages and the bards of the Arthurian period. It is quite possible that folk-memory was effective during that dim period, but it is equally possible that the cromlechs became gradually diverted from their original purpose, whether sepulchral, astronomical, or other. This diversion would be a natural process when the functions of priest and lawgiver became more differentiated. The

religious ceremonies which accompanied legislative and judicial meetings would tend to conceal the change which had occurred.

Sir Norman Lockyer considers the whole question of Gorsedd circles so important, that, in the second edition of his work (1909), he has devoted a special chapter to the subject. Should it be finally established, beyond cavil, that Gorsedd circles have been frequently erected throughout the period which extends from the fifth century of our era until the present day, there will be a fair claim for continuity, if not of function, yet of habit, from prehistoric times. But there will also arise a grave suspicion whether some of the cromlechs, hitherto ascribed to prehistoric peoples, may not, after all, be the more permanent Gorsedd circles of a later date. We cannot forget the misleading stone-circle set up at Pontypridd no farther back than fifty years ago, by the "Arch-Druid" of that time, Myfyr Morganwg (or Myvyr Morgannwg); nor the sham "Druidic structure," raised in the neighbourhood of Pateley Bridge, in Yorkshire, about thirty years previously.

Having uttered these objections, and having implied the necessity of slow-moving circumspection, one cannot think that the boundary of knowledge has yet been reached. Frequently, excavations reveal little more evidence than was already suspected after critical external examination. If then the archaeologist and the astronomer can find agreement in common premisses, the theodolite may indeed help the spade and atone for its limitations. While feeling persuaded that our megalithic monuments were never alined with such nicety that the orientation can be expressed in seconds, one can still understand that they may have been set out with greater accuracy than is commonly supposed. When we recollect, too, that many of our megaliths had at first probably a sepulchral purpose, we shall see no sufficient reason why they should not have been planned, at any rate, as skilfully as funeral earthworks.

The Rev. J. Griffith, indeed, carries the orientation theory further, and applies it to primitive earthworks of a general character—those which are popularly known as camps and forts. Speaking of Burrington Camp, Somerset, he claims that its Southern bank is oriented to the equinox, and that another

bank corresponds both to the sunset line at the summer solstice, and to sunrise at the winter solstice. He adds that the star alinement of this earthwork has been "worked out" by Sir Norman Lockyer to Arcturus. Castle Dyke, near Aysgarth, Yorkshire, gives indications of an alinement either to Alpha Centauri or to Capella[1].

These much-canvassed theories have led us away from our highroad, yet the digression was really slight, seeing that many of our megaliths mark the position of early burial-places. It is not asserted that all our ancient stone monuments are of this character, but some, at least, of those which are claimed as "temples," were primarily graves; hence they come under our survey. Here, too, it seems fitting to notice another matter, dependent to some extent on the orientation of graves, and illustrative of the persistency of unconscious folk-memory.

The modern sexton, having filled up the grave, banks up the surplus soil in the form of a long, neatly-finished mound. Is there any obvious reason why he should do this, instead of spreading out the remaining earth until all is level? The explanation of positive necessity is not admissible: I have noticed one churchyard in which mounds are not raised, just as, in two or three other instances, all the tombstones are laid in a horizontal position. The popular belief, if it is found to exist, ascribes the mound to an economical cause—the advantage of banking up some soil to prevent the shallow depression which is the after result of subsidence. But this does not account for the oblong mound with curved ends—a shape which does not altogether correspond with that of the pit which is being closed. Nor does it explain the careful turfing-over which sometimes follows, nor the masonry or coped tombstone which is frequently designed to preserve the accepted form of the mound.

The only satisfactory answer to the question, so far as competent authorities have yet discovered, is that the modern grave-mound is the shrunken representative of the long barrow, the features having been retained because of the inertia of social custom, and because inveterate imitation is easier than new experiment. It is noteworthy that the modern mound is often

[1] J. Griffith, in *Nature*, LXXX. p. 71.

so large as to be unsightly. The size is especially increased in places where, as in the little Huguenot burying ground at Wandsworth, the pile is surmounted by a "box" tomb of brick or stone. (These mounds are not, however, comparable in size to that of Chislehurst, p. 76 *supra.*) To the late Mr Grant Allen belongs, I believe, the chief credit for the barrow theory, the conclusion having been forced upon him by long study of the comparative burial customs of primitive folk[1]. Thomas Wright had earlier classed the Saxon barrow as the prototype of the modern grave-mound; and, in the eighteenth century, Hearne had remarked, concerning tumuli and churchyards: "But now the straitness of [churchyards] will not permit such *aggeres consecratos*, as some terme them, to be made there."

The proposed interpretation involves the assumption that the practice of barrow-burial, in the sense of raising a tumulus of some kind over the dead, has never completely died out in our country. Link by link, as we pass onwards from the Neolithic period, through the Bronze and Iron Ages, and include the Romans, Saxons, and Danes in our survey, we discover that this claim can be made good. The chief difference between the ancient practice and that of our own day lies in the fact that mound-burial is now almost universal, at least throughout our country, while in former ages it was not quite so general. One may hazard the opinion that mound-burial may have been markedly the exception in prehistoric times. The great ones of the land were truly laid under these earthen monuments, but in what manner the great masses of the poorer folk were buried we may never know. Perhaps these humbler members of the community were interred in much the same way as nearly the whole of the present population may expect to be interred; that is, a hole was dug in the ground, and perhaps a tiny tumulus was heaped above the buried corpse. But the mound was not always raised, especially when cremation came into fashion. The question need not be here complicated by a consideration of the

[1] G. Allen, *Evol. of Idea of God*, p. 41; cf. T. Wright, *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 2nd ed., 1861, p. 406. A similar view is taken by G. Baldwin Brown, in *The Arts in Early England*, 1903, I. pp. 266–7. See also T. Hearne, *Coll. of Curious Discourses*, 1775, I. p. 225.

evolution of the coffin, since some remarks will be made on this subject later. An instance or two will tend to confirm the opinion just expressed. Dr T. Rice Holmes has collected numerous records to show that there were moundless graves during the Bronze Age[1]. Such graves were dug in caverns, or sunk on the chalk downs, or in other soils near a settlement. Doubtless, other examples remain yet to be discovered. The reader will, however, note that, except in the case of caves, the original absence of a mound cannot always be absolutely proven; the forces of Nature, aided by the plough, may have obliterated the external signs of burial. During the Early Iron Age, mounds appear to have been even less general than in the preceding period. Thus, several pit-burials have been recorded from Hagbourne Hill, near Didcot, Berkshire[2], and from the celebrated "urn-field" at Aylesford, Kent, which dates from *c.* B.C. 50[3]. For the intervening Roman period, there is no need to cite examples, since they abound, and of the Anglo-Saxon burials, it may be sufficient to state that in various localities (Cambridge, Northampton, Gloucester, Wiltshire), groups of graves have been found in such close proximity that the tumuli, if they ever existed, must have been of small dimensions[4].

All through these centuries, nevertheless, barrow-burial had persisted. Nay, more, the barrows were often collected in groups, representing the prototypes of our modern cemeteries. The classic example of such clusters is seen in the barrows around Stonehenge; within a circuit of three miles it is said that there are about three hundred barrows[5]. Another illuminating record is that of the collection of barrows known as the Danes' Graves, near Kilham, on the Wolds of Yorkshire. Not fewer than 500 graves once existed here, "massed together as in a modern churchyard, not isolated as in the Bronze period[6]." Mr J. R.

[1] T. Rice Holmes, *op. cit.* pp. 178–9.

[2] *Guide to Early Iron Age*, p. 103.

[3] Sir A. J. Evans in *Archaeologia*, LII. pp. 315–88; *Guide to Early Iron Age*, pp. 114–16.

[4] J. de Baye, *Indus. Arts of Anglo-Saxons*, p. 123.

[5] B. C. A. Windle, *Life in Early Britain*, 1897, pp. 112–13.

[6] *Guide to Early Iron Age*, pp. 111–12; J. R. Mortimer, in *Trans. E. Riding Antiq. Soc.*, III. 1895, pp. 53–62.

Mortimer found that the burial-mounds of East Yorkshire fell readily into clusters, some of which contained so many as thirty or more individual barrows. From Mr Mortimer's conclusion that the ground-plans of these groups agree with the outlines of certain of the heavenly constellations, notably with that of Charles's Wain, we must, however, withhold assent. The Stonehenge barrows are grouped, not actually "massed." Other groups of tumuli might be given; we will merely mention those interesting cases where one or two large barrows are connected with collections of tiny mounds; the smaller ones, perhaps, representing the resting-place of the poorer tribesmen[1]. It would be safe to assert that most of the small barrows have ere now been long levelled down. Of the larger mounds not a tithe of the original number remains.

The clusters of barrows, one may consider, led indirectly to the Christian cemeteries. At first, as stated in a sermon by St Chrysostom (A.D. 403), the Christian communities had their cemeteries outside the walls of cities[2]. Interment in churchyards was not a primitive practice, and was prohibited by the decrees of early church councils. The custom gradually crept into use about the sixth century[3], the innovation appearing first in connection with monastic settlements. By the time of St Cuthbert (*c.* A.D. 742) the practice was becoming well known, the bones of pious men and martyrs being actually admitted within the building itself[4]. To such an extent did the practice grow, that the floors of churches often became too uneven for walking over. As a parenthesis, we note that the early ban against churchyard burial must not be interpreted as contradicting the probability of the building of churches near older Christian cemeteries.

Scandinavia was apparently in a state of transition from barrow burial to small-mound burial at a later date, namely, during the Viking Age (A.D. 700—1000). At that period it

[1] T. Rice Holmes, *op. cit.* p. 178.

[2] J. Douglas, *Nenia Britannica*, 1793, p. 126.

[3] Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 78; G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, I. pp. 257–8.

[4] Douglas, *op. cit.* p. 126; Tyack, *op. cit.* p. 78; *The Arts in Early England*, 1903, I. pp. 266–7.

became the habit to make low barrows for the poorer folk, the "warrior-houes" being reserved for the families of powerful chieftains[1]. And one cannot doubt that the collaterals of the Scandinavians—the Anglo-Saxons—developed their burial customs along similar lines. In addition, it must be remembered that these latter peoples, when settled in England, had a marked predilection for burial in the older and larger barrows which they found already in existence. Such "secondary burials" are familiar to the archaeologist, and are discriminated by the level and posture of the skeletons, as well as by the associated objects. When the conversion of the people to Christianity became more general, such practices were discountenanced. Down to the eighth century, however, it was usual to bury the illegitimate offspring of nuns and others in these older mounds.

The Capitularies of Charlemagne (A.D. 789) order the burial of Christians in cemeteries, and expressly forbid the pagan practice of barrow-burial: "*Jubemus, ut corpora Christianorum Saxonum ad coemiteria* [al. *coemeteria*] *Ecclesiae deferantur, et non ad tumulos paganorum*[2]." The burial-ground soon became known in Germany as "Gottes-acker" (God's Acre). This change, too, completed the break between cremation and simple burial of the corpse. Orientation of graves now became a fixed rule. Keysler suggests, and his view has since been largely upheld, that the transfer of custom was due to the doctrine of the Resurrection, as epitomized in 1 Cor. xv. 5 et seqq. and St John xii. 24[3]. In other words, the new religion discouraged cremation, and enjoined simple earth burial, thus curiously reviving the primitive habit (cf. p. 264 *infra*).

If we desire, to-day, to see folk who represent the transitional stage of culture which connects the large tumulus with the smaller and more insignificant mound, we may visit the natives of the Pandsh valley, in the district of the Pamirs. Recently it has been discovered by Olufsen that these "equine-faced" folk raise a burial-mound over the dead, and surround it by high stones or a clay wall, according to the social standing, riches, or

[1] J. J. A. Worsaae, *Pre-History of the North*, tr. H. F. M. Simpson, 1886, p. 192.

[2] J. de Baye, *op. cit.* p. 119 n.; *The Arts in Early England*, I. p. 263 n.; J. C. Keysler, *Antiq. Selectae*, 1720, pp. 108–9.

[3] Keysler, *loc. cit.*

holiness of the deceased man[1]. The distinctions of rank have ever been preserved by the tomb, in spite of proverbial wisdom.

Reverting to the "mould'ring heap" of which Gray sings in his *Elegy*, it may fairly be asked why the mound should be long and not round. A decisive answer cannot be tendered. It is worth considering, nevertheless, whether this shape does not represent a "throw-back" to Neolithic custom. The round barrows which fell under the Christian ban enclosed the relics of burnt or partially burnt bodies. The long barrows, which, with some possible exceptions[2], are believed to be of earlier date, were raised over corpses which had not been cremated. Now, if it be true, as Mr Grant Allen supposed, that the shape of the circular tumulus was determined by the cinerary urn around which it was piled, while the form of the long barrow depended on the subjacent chambered tomb—the underground home or palace of the dead person[3]—we begin to see a glimmer of light. For the subterranean chamber, being intended to hold an uncremated corpse, would be roughly adapted to the form of the human body. In like manner, when inhumation was again enforced, there would be an unconscious return to the use of the long mound. As if to show once more that no rule is of universal application, certain exceptions must be recorded. In some village churchyards, a few round mounds are interspersed with the long ones. Occasionally, the round mounds may be explained by the division of a long mound caused by the tread of careless feet, repeated throughout several generations. That this is not always the reason, is plain to the observant eye. Do these mounds represent the graves of children, or of unbaptized infants? On the Sussex coast, the graves of drowned sailors are said to be thus distinguished. Once again, why should it be customary, as in some churchyards of Dorsetshire and the Isle of Wight, to make the long mounds of unusual size?

A fact of some little interest, though it has no scientific bearing on our theme, is that the late Professor Tyndall's grave,

[1] O. Olufsen, *Through the unknown Pamirs*, 1904, p. 151.

[2] Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, 1905, pp. xix, xx, lxxviii, &c. G. Allen, *op. cit.* p. 31.

in Haslemere churchyard, Surrey, is a round tumulus, clad with bracken and heather. The memorial took this unpretentious form in accordance with the expressed wish of the philosopher himself. Through the kindness of Miss Truda Hutchinson, I am enabled to give an illustration (Fig. 51) of the mound.

FIG. 51. Tyndall's grave, Haslemere churchyard, Surrey. A modern round barrow.

For the purpose of comparison, a round barrow situated at Henley-on-Thames is shown (Fig. 52).

We have seen that orientation, as we know it, was not strictly observed in the burials of prehistoric folk, while, in our day, it is all but universal. Contrariwise, what was originally a common feature—the placing of the corpse in a crouched or sitting posture—is now decidedly exceptional, being restricted to the

burials of very eccentric or very pious persons[1]. Interment in an upright position has not, however, been of infrequent occurrence. Ben Jonson was so buried at Westminster. The case of the Hobarts, who are buried in a brickwork vault at Blickling, Norfolk, is also often cited. The vertical position was formerly adopted for the interment of captains in the army[2]. The body of Clement Spelman, Recorder of Nottingham, was immured (A.D. 1679) in a pillar in Narburgh church[3]. Many

FIG. 52. Round barrow, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.

other curious vagaries of custom might be given; one or two instances must suffice. Surrey folk are familiar with Leith Hill Tower, under which lie the remains of Mr Richard Hull, who died in 1772, and whose peculiar opinions led him to stipulate burial in this elevated region[4]. In another instance, a corpse

[1] E. Howlett, in *Curious Church Customs*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p. 134. See also list of references given in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. pp. 158, 491.

[2] E. Howlett, *op. cit.* pp. 133–4. Authority cited. For general examples, consult *Notes and Queries*, references *supra*.

[3] E. Howlett, *loc. cit.*

[4] O. Manning and W. Bray, *Hist. and Antiquities of Surrey*, 1809, II. p. 146. This example is valuable as illustrating the growth of myth. A legend of the district,

was buried within a flint pyramid at the top of a fir-clad hill near Great Missenden, in Buckinghamshire. A chapter might easily be filled with such particulars, but enough has been said to show that, amid all these eccentricities of habit, there is often an unwitting reversion to primitive methods. The similarities have been revealed only by the labours of the barrow-digger and the antiquary. Not only has the practice of orientation been found to have a very ancient descent, but many quaint usages, ofttimes deemed abnormal, have proved to be genuine survivals. In the next chapter some of these survivals will be considered. Not a little pathos is associated with our knowledge of these details. Bones which had "quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests," have been unromantically disturbed by the busy archaeologist, and compelled to yield their secret. One cannot withhold sympathy from the investigator who had obtained permission to open a certain barrow, but who pondered and procrastinated, viewing, with indulgent eye, the even outline of the grassy mound. Day by day his pity for the sleeping warrior increased, and he hesitated to thrust his spade into the wind-swept turf, until the opportunity for work had slipped away. One admires the spirit, yet to widen the limits of knowledge that spirit has to be sadly, though judiciously, corrected.

dating perhaps nearly as far back as the time of Manning and Bray, states that Mr Hull was "buried on horseback, upside down," because he believed that, at the last day, the world would be "turned topsy-turvy." (See Murray, *Handbook for Surrey*, 5th edition, 1898, p. 114; Black, *Guide to Surrey*, 5th edition, 1898, p. 126.)

CHAPTER VII

SURVIVALS IN BURIAL CUSTOMS

A DISCUSSION of burial customs might, in the absence of a little careful selection of material, tend to become rather gruesome. This may be conceded at the outset, but, fortunately, an impersonal treatment is possible, and one need not even imitate the mournful example of "Old Mortality." There is nothing morbid in a dispassionate review of customs which, in all ages and among all peoples, seem to have been general, because born of that vicissitude which is the common lot of man. Perhaps, in some measure, the antiquary may be able to reach the standard of stoicism set up by John Earle: "His grave does not fright him [the antiquary], because he has been used to sepulchers, and he likes Death the better, because it gathers him to his fathers[1]."

Already we have spoken of the orientation of graves, and the degradation of the barrow to the grave-mound. Several kindred matters must now receive attention, and in a later chapter, when chariot-burial is considered, our eyes will again be turned backward. For customs are like crystals with several facets; to get a true perception we must, in each case, frequently change our point of view.

A few more instances of the development of funeral monuments may be first noted. It has been shown elsewhere that the churchyard headstone may be traced back, step by step, to the unhewn menhir set up by primitive man on some bleak moorland. Within the last two or three years, there have been discovered in France and Italy remarkable connecting links, in the so-called "statue-menhirs," prehistoric stones rudely carved

[1] J. Earle, *Microcosmographie*, 1628, p. 31.

to represent the human head and trunk[1]. The evidence derived from observing the gradual evolution is corroborated by strange cases of survival. Thus in St Martha's churchyard, near Chilworth, Surrey, low headstones, untouched by any tool, have been set up in considerable numbers. The slabs are merely masses of

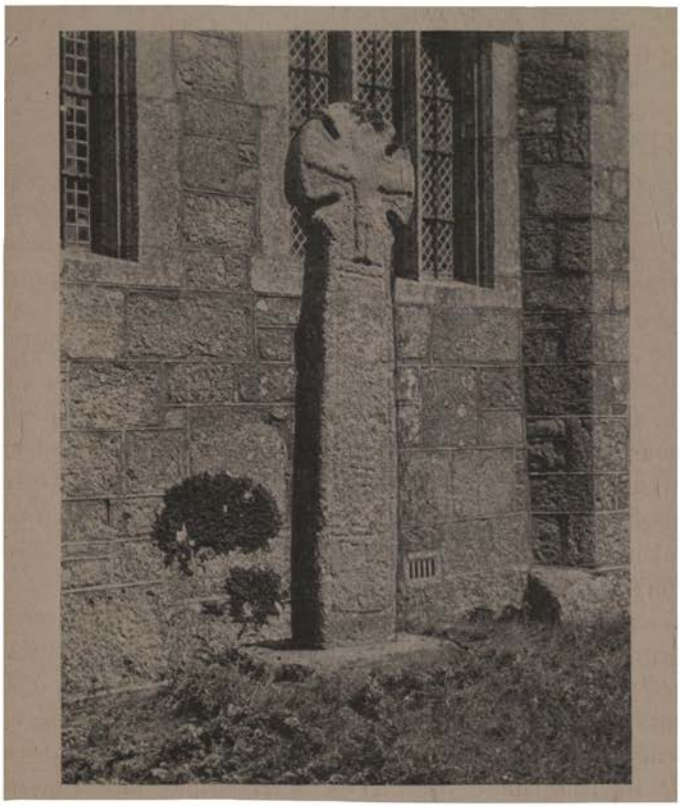

FIG. 53. Inscribed, ornamented, round-headed cross, Sancreed churchyard, Cornwall. In the head of the cross is a figure of Our Lord in relief. The shaft is decorated with interlaced work, and contains a panel with an imperfect inscription.

ironstone dug out of the Lower Greensand of the hill on which the church is built. Pursuing another line of descent, Mr J. Romilly Allen claimed that a similar kind of coarse

[1] W. Johnson, *Folk-Memory*, 1908, pp. 134–5; S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Dartmoor*, 1900, pp. 64–6. The "statue-menhirs" are described in *La Revue préhistorique*, 5e Année, 1910, pp. 129–37.

monolith had developed into the "wheel-cross" and the "free-standing" cross of Christian churchyards[1] (Fig. 53 and Fig. 62). The dolmen, or "stone-table," a familiar prehistoric monument, has been replaced by the family vault and the altar-tomb, the ossuary of Brittany, the flat tombstone of the village graveyard, and the sarcophagus of the cathedral[2]. The cromlech, a circle of upright stone pillars, is by some believed to have been the forerunner of the temple and the round church[3]; but this claim may be waived, as not fully proven (cf. p. 99 *supra*). More plausible is the theory that the rude, unfashioned grave-stake is represented to-day by the humble wooden cross of our cemeteries[4]. Each of these examples of unconscious imitation and modern survival might be examined at some length, but the theories which they illustrate are now so familiar as to be commonplace. Not quite so well known is the theory that we have derived our custom of placing shrubs on graves from our heathen forefathers of the Bronze Age, who were wont to plant trees on their burial mounds[5]. Mr Grant Allen argued, with some reason, that the pine-trees so frequently found on round barrows in the South of England are survivors of those placed there by the first mound-raisers, since the Scottish pine is not now indigenous to that tract of country[6] (cf. p. 401 *infra*).

Attempts have been made to connect the noun "barrow" with the verb "to bury," but the relationship cannot really be upheld. The primary notion involved in "barrow" was that of a height, while "to bury" was associated with concealment or covering. The word "barrow," it may be remarked, went out of use in English literature before A.D. 1400, but it survived locally in dialects, and was ultimately taken back into the nomenclature of archaeology[7]. But, though philology forbids

[1] J. Romilly Allen, *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1905, p. 186.

[2] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 132, 134, 136; S. Baring-Gould, *loc. cit.*

[3] E. Clodd, *Story of Primitive Man*, 1898, p. 136; *Evol. of Idea of God*, p. 41.

[4] *Evol. of Idea of God*, pp. 50–1.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 55. (See ch. VII. generally.)

[6] *Ibid.* p. 55. For information on Tree-worship and Tree-spirits generally see J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 1890, pp. 56–108.

[7] *New Oxford Dict.* and *Cent. Dict.* under "Bury," "Barrow," "Bergh."

us to bind these two words together, the actual continuity between mound-burial and pit-burial, as we have seen, has never been completely broken. Something has been said about the later development of barrows and megaliths; it is now desirable to trace the earliest representatives of our wooden coffin. To begin with, we notice that coffins did not come into universal use until a little over two centuries ago. This is proved by numerous terriers and by minutes of parish vestries. In London, it is true, burial in the simple winding-sheet seems to have been discarded so far back as the early years of Elizabeth, but in remote districts the custom lingered much later. Thus in the Isle of Man, down to the early part of the eighteenth century, the bodies of the poor were wrapped in a blanket fastened with a skewer, and were carried on a bier to the grave. A hundred years afterwards, coffinless burials survived to a considerable extent in county Wexford. Sir R. Phillimore quotes Lord Stowell's dictum that funerals were either "coffined" or "coffinless," and were charged for accordingly. The use of coffins is extremely ancient, but at first the custom was by no means common[1]. There appears, in fact, to have been no real uniformity in this, as in many other practices, since the earliest days of English Christendom. And in this lack of system we find at once an approximation to the customs of the barrow period, when corpses were either enclosed, or buried without a cist, the exact reason for the difference of treatment being not always explicable by the general ideas held at the time.

Lest there should still be any doubt of the antiquity of coffins, it is necessary to recall those coffins of the Middle Ages (Fig. 54), often hewn out of a single block, and familiar to persons who have inspected the relics of ruined abbeys and the nooks and corners of our existing parish churches. These stone coffins are obviously the representatives of prehistoric tombs, though they may not be in the true British line of descent. Rather do they suggest the Roman coffins of stone, lead, or brick (Figs. 55 B, 56). Occasionally, Roman coffins of stone are

[1] Sir R. Phillimore, *Eccles. Law of the Church of England*, 1873, I. p. 857; E. Howlett, in *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 134–5; *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 84; M. H. Bloxam, *Monumental Architecture*, 1834, p. 54.

found, covered with a lid of undoubted Saxon workmanship, proving that there had been a re-adaptation. We note, in passing, that the stone coffin must be carefully distinguished from those hog-backed or coped stones which were employed as grave covers in early Christian times, and to which Mr Romilly Allen assigned a Saxon or Scandinavian origin[1]. With respect

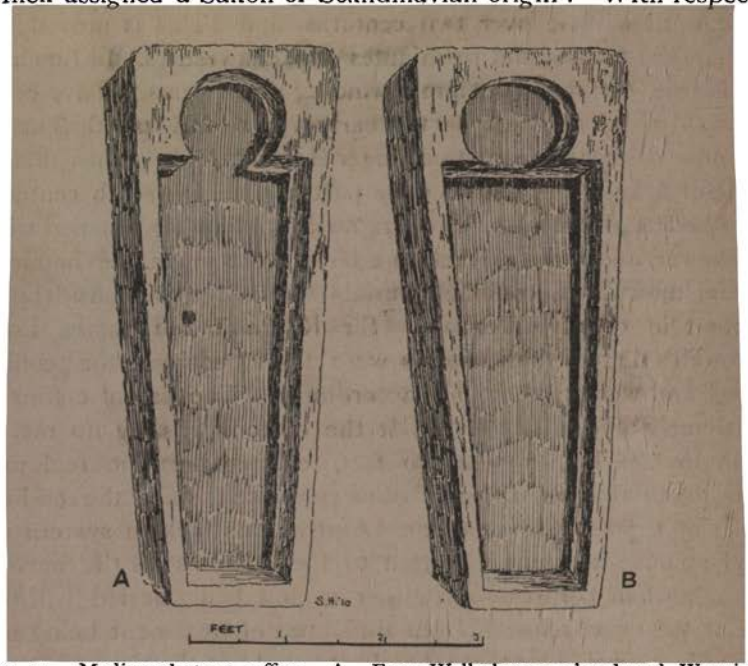

FIG. 54. Mediaeval stone coffins. A. From Wellesbourne churchyard, Warwickshire (Bloxam's *Mon. Archit.*). There is a hole in the bottom of the coffin, as in the prehistoric specimen from Gristhorpe (Fig. 55 B). An almost exact replica of this coffin may be seen in the Guildhall Museum, London, associated with a thirteenth century lid bearing a foliated cross. B. From Eynesford church, Kent. This specimen has a raised head-rest.

to the wooden coffin, commonly adjudged as of Christian design, there is occasionally some difficulty. At Colchester, wooden coffins have been found associated with leaden ones,

[1] J. Romilly Allen, *op. cit.* p. 182. A description of stone coffin lids is given by G. Clinch, in *Old Eng. Churches*, 1903, pp. 180–3. Very small coffin lids of stone, probably memorials of children, and assigned to the late 13th or early 14th century, have been recorded from Deddington, Oxford, and from Houghton-le-Spring, Durham. (*Gent. Mag.*, N.S., XVIII. 1865, pp. 327, 488–9.)

and have been taken to indicate a Christian element among the population. In connection with the leaden coffins were

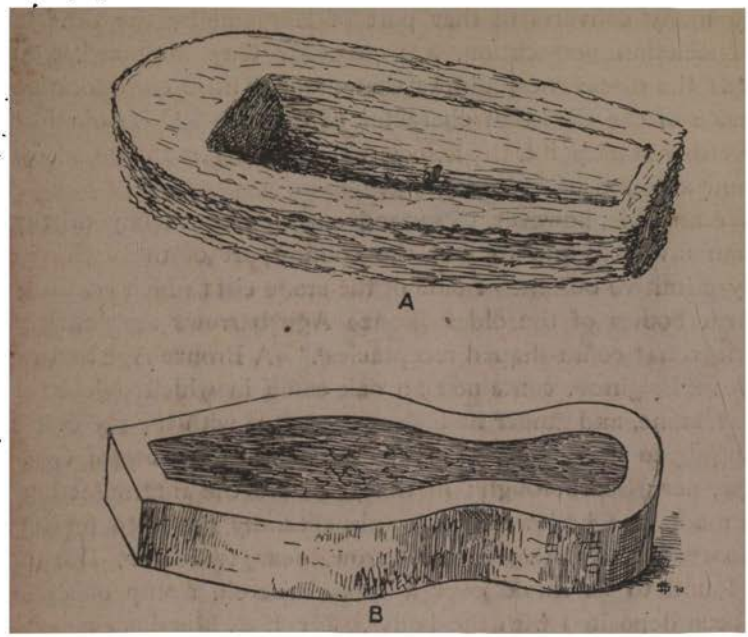

FIG. 55. A. Prehistoric coffin, formed of a hollowed oak trunk, found in a barrow at Gristhorpe, near Scarborough. The bark is still adhering to the timber. A hole (3″ × 1″) has been cut in the bottom of the coffin. The relics indicated that the grave probably belonged to the Bronze Age. (After T. Wright.)

B. Roman coffin of baked clay, Aldborough, Yorkshire. (After T. Wright.) The shapes of such coffins are rather variable.

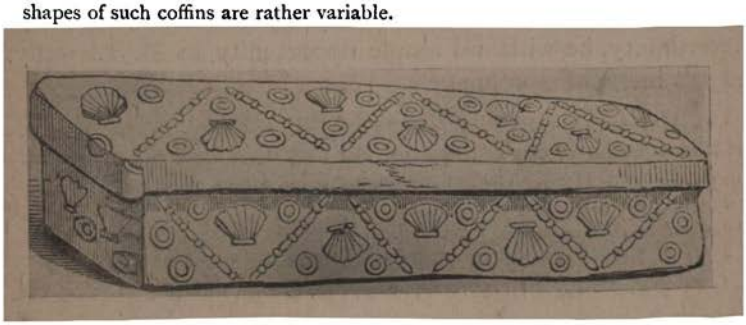

FIG. 56. Roman coffin of lead, found at Colchester. Length 4′ 3″; depth, exclusive of lid, 9½″; width at head 15″, at foot 11″. The lid has overlapping edges. The decoration consists of scallop shells, concentric rings, and lines of beaded ornament.

found Roman coins, mainly of the Constantine group, so that the burials were of late date. Yet, although there were probably many converts in that part of England by the time of the Diocletian persecution, A.D. 303, Mr Guy Maynard, who records the discoveries, admits that there is little corroborative evidence of the Christian character of the graves[1]. Looked at from either standpoint, the association of coffins and coins seems to show a period of transition.

We are able, however, to extend our view much beyond the Roman invasion, and to find the counterpart of the coffin in many primitive burials. Some of the stone cists which enclosed unburnt bodies of the older Bronze Age barrows are actually described as "coffin-shaped receptacles[2]." A Bronze Age barrow at Hove, Brighton, contained an oak coffin in which objects of bronze, stone, and amber had been deposited with the skeleton[3]. Belonging to the same period was the famous barrow of Gristhorpe, near Scarborough; in this example the interment had been made in a hollowed oak trunk, specially prepared for the purpose[4] (Fig. 55 A). King Barrow, near Wareham, Dorset, was found to be raised over a coffin, wherein a cup of shale had been deposited with the body[5]. Mr J. R. Mortimer asserts that traces of wooden supports for protecting the body are often found. In a barrow at Easington, in Holderness, broad slabs, made from the trunk of a willow, formed the covering. It would be superfluous to continue the list, but should the reader desire to examine further material in justification of the plea of continuity, he will find ample opportunity in Mr Llewellynn Jewitt's interesting volume[6].

[1] G. Maynard, in *Memorials of Old Essex*, ed. A. Clifton Kelway, 1908, p. 37. For Roman coffins of clay and lead, see *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 2nd edition, 1861, pp. 313–5. The 4th edition, 1885, pp. 370–5, contains a fuller account of wooden coffins.

[2] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 54.

[3] Sir J. Evans, *Anc. Stone Impts of Gt Britain*, 2nd edition, 1897, p. 185; W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, p. 376 n., gives a summary of discoveries of this kind.

[4] Sir J. Evans, *op. cit.* p. 398; J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, p. xxvii and note.

[5] Sir J. Evans, *op. cit.* p. 398.

[6] L. Jewitt, *Grave Mounds and their Contents*, 1870, pp. 143–7. Cf. Gen. A.

The Roman and pre-Roman periods have been considered; we turn to the Romano-British burials, and proceed in the forward direction.

Gen. Pitt-Rivers discovered "dug-out" coffins at Woodyates, and other sites in Cranborne Chase, and he inferred the former existence of further specimens by the presence of nails which were associated with the burials. To ascertain whether the record can be extended into later historical times, we might turn especially to our Northern churchyards. Some examples of the stone cell, found at Alloa and elsewhere, are described by Sir Arthur Mitchell as being simply cists, enlarged so as to avoid doubling up the body[1]. Later stages of survival are witnessed by the rude box-shaped tombstones of many churchyards in Devonshire, Gloucestershire, and other counties[2]. Stone coffins have been dug up in the Dorsetshire graveyard of Worth Matravers, almost identical with those which have been unearthed from barrows in the surrounding Isle of Purbeck. In short, it is clear that the stone coffin and the table tombstone are derived from the ancient stone cist, and this, in its turn, bears some analogy to the chamber of the long barrow.

This endurance of custom becomes the more remarkable when we remember that great changes have occurred in the mode of treating the corpse at burial. At first there was inhumation; then we have a period during which inhumation and cremation were, to some extent, contemporaneous, while, as a variant, partial burning of the body was common. Cremation gradually becomes obsolete, and earth-burial again comes into vogue. If we carry back our thoughts to the advent of Christianity into Britain, we see that the trend of custom was the exact reverse of that which obtains in our day, when cremation is very slowly replacing earth-burial. The substitution of inhumation for the funeral pyre is one of the four chief distinctions drawn by Mr Romilly Allen between the burial

Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, II. pp. 3, 32, 40; III. pp. 15, 17, 321, etc.

[1] Sir A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present*, 1889, pp. 242-3.

[2] *Folk-Memory*, p. 134.

customs of the Celtic pagans and the Celtic Christians[1]. Yet the change was a slow one; in the remote fastnesses of the country, the custom of burning bodies lingered for generations, though it was generally extinct in the fourth century of our era[2]. Indeed, Macrobius, the critic and philosopher, who wrote at the beginning of the fifth century, declared that cremation had been discontinued for so long a time that it was only from books that he could glean information concerning the custom[3]. Whether the turnover from cremation to earth-burial were always the result of religious or of racial influences is a moot point[4]. The evidence seems to prove, as already hinted, that in Britain the cause was mainly religious (p. 263 *supra*), though one dare not assert that religion was the sole cause. Cremation must always have been a comparatively expensive process. Someone has well said, "To this day we speak of the ashes of the great, and the bones of the poor." At all events, transitions may be noted, as in the case of the famous flat-earth burial-ground at Aylesford, which was referred to in the preceding chapter. The ashes of the "family circle" represented at Aylesford had been enclosed in urns, and then placed in pits, as before stated (p. 261 *supra*). Sir A. J. Evans supposes that the variation of custom was due to the influence of Belgic conquerors. The urn-burials represented at Aylesford superseded the old skeleton interments of the late-Celtic peoples, as exemplified in the "chariot-burials" of Yorkshire, where the skeleton of the departed warrior is laid alongside the chariot[5]. In Scandinavia and Northern Germany there was a further intermediate stage, for the ashes were sometimes deposited in the grave without any enclosing urn. To such graves the Northern archaeologists apply the term "Brandgruben," or cremation pits. This mode of burial is connected with the La Tène period of culture[6].

[1] J. Romilly Allen, *Monumental Hist. of the Early Brit. Church*, 1889, p. 65.

[2] *Archaeologia*, XXXVII. p. 456–7.

[3] *De Macrobii Saturnaliorum fontibus*, L. vii. ch. 7.

[4] *Folk-Lore*, XII. 1901, pp. 361–2; 468–9.

[5] Sir A. J. Evans, in *Archaeologia*, LII. pp. 386–7.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 386. The exploration of "King Bjorn's Tumulus," near Upsala, afforded still another phase of transition. The mound, which belonged to the 4th period of the Northern Bronze Age, contained an oak stem, hollowed to serve as

Though this question of cremation may appear to have slight connection with the use of coffins, a little study will show that there is a bond of association. The ashes of the dead were, it is true, usually enshrined in a cinerary urn, and this vessel was often placed in a chamber specially constructed for the purpose. But it was the coffin which was essentially a receptacle for preserving the entire body, and which therefore became the sign of earth-burial. Dr Rock lays down the rule that bishops, kings, and persons of rank were interred in stone coffins, while the bulk of the people had coffins of wood. Whenever the receptacle was made of wood, and not of stone, one might have supposed that it would readily become an accessory in the rite of cremation. This was apparently not the case, though, obviously, proof would be difficult to obtain. The body seems to have been burnt in an open pyre, not enclosed in a chest. Contrariwise, in a Saxon cemetery at Sibertswold, in Kent, ninety-nine of the coffins had been "submitted to the fire," the bodies themselves being unburnt. Again, in the early Christian burials a cist of stones, instead of a coffin, was sometimes placed around the corpse[1], but there was no reversion to the funeral pyre. Yet, as already noticed, the employment, in isolated instances, of rude coffins, to say nothing of the cists by which they were foreshadowed, was probably in some measure contemporary with the general pagan custom of burning the dead. There was an overlapping of custom. Such seeming anachronisms, while they puzzle, do not greatly surprise the archaeologist, to whom such occurrences are no new feature. He frequently sees remote traces of the beginnings of a practice of which the general adoption was long delayed; he observes rites and customs overlapping in time and struggling for victory; and, in his own day, he is a witness of extraordinary vestiges and of ceremonies which must be deemed reversions or "throw-backs." The overstepping of one burial rite by another of older

a coffin, but intended, as the relics proved, to hold the cremated remains of the deceased person. (*Reliquary*, xv. 1909, p. 148.) Cf. *Vict. Hist. of Kent*, I. pp. 434–5.

[1] *Mon. Hist. of the Early Brit. Church*, p. 65. Cf. D. Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, 1903, II. pp. 252–3.

origin is not a whit more inexplicable than the contemporaneous use, by man, of diverse kinds of clothes or of varying types of habitation. It is perhaps the more difficult problem to determine, in the absence of additional data, why, at a particular period, one group of men is found dwelling in pile-houses on the margins of lake or mere, while another class frequents caves and rock-shelters, and a third prefers the wattled hut with sunken floor, and roof of reeds or heather. Convenience was doubtless a partial cause of these diversities, just as belief was the great regulator of burial customs, but this is not the full answer. We must look to primary race distinctions, in which were the germs of the variations, and to the fact that human immigrations to Britain occurred at intervals, so that mental as well as physical territories were invaded and transgressed.

A remarkable instance of anticipation will illustrate, to some extent, what has just been said. The antiquary is well aware that, during the Stuart period, in order to encourage the woollen industry, statutes were passed (A.D. 1666, 1678, 1680), which made it compulsory to bury the dead in woollen shrouds. An interesting chapter of burial-lore might be written on this curious subject, for the Acts, though they had long been in abeyance, were not repealed until late in the reign of George III. (A.D. 1814)[1]. The practice is recalled in our own day when, by request of the dying person, the body is enfolded in some special garb, usually of wool, before being committed to the earth. The strange circumstance, however, is that such a custom should have been foreshadowed in the far-away past. In Danish burials belonging to the earliest Bronze Age, the bodies are sometimes found to have been placed in hollowed tree trunks, and the remains show that a woollen shroud had been used. Skeletons wrapped in a woollen textile have likewise been discovered at Rylston, in the Western Riding of Yorkshire[2]. I have provisionally regarded these instances as revealing anticipations rather than origins, but it is possible that many intermediate examples could be supplied. One of these gradations is perhaps traceable in the custom of burying a person in

[1] *Curious Church Customs*, p. 132; *Mon. Architecture*, p. 76.

[2] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 43.

his ordinary dress. If these links were complete, there would obviously be entire continuity, but if we encountered a gap, it is probable that the eighteenth century practice would have to be considered as a "throw-back."

It is now time to review the custom, still common among uncivilized peoples, and once extremely popular in Britain, of placing objects with the corpse in the grave. A mass of evidence has been collated and examined, and though only a portion can be given here, we must, while shunning tediousness, present as much detail as is actually profitable. A rough preliminary classification of these funerary objects would include, (1) weapons and useful implements; (2) amulets, talismans, and symbolical objects; (3) trinkets, ornaments, and decorative articles; (4) a miscellaneous group, partly useful, partly symbolical or commemorative. It is necessary to premise that this classification is conventional, and lacks well-defined boundaries, hence, while dealing with one series of relics, other groups will be forced upon our attention, producing, later, unavoidable repetition.

That the groups enumerated have a somewhat arbitrary basis is rendered clear when we perceive a principle running through the whole series, most effective in prehistoric days, but probably reaching, in a vague and partial manner, to the utmost confines of modern religious thought. This principle, which must be briefly outlined, has been well described by Professor Tylor under the name of Animism. The term implies the doctrine of Spiritual Beings or Souls—a deep-lying belief in the two-fold nature of both animate and inanimate objects, as opposed to the teachings of Materialistic philosophy[1]. Animism supplies us, according to Professor Tylor, with "a minimum definition of Religion[2]." The primordial idea, which impelled early man to acts of worship, was, according to this theory, the belief that not only his own fellows, but the beasts, trees, and surrounding objects, natural or artificial, possessed spirits—ethereal images, as it were—of themselves. Hence the dead man must be provided with food, weapons, and other necessaries;

[1] E. B. Tylor, *Prim. Culture*, 3rd edition, 1891, I. pp. 424, 425.

[2] Tylor, *op. cit.* I. p. 424. Cf. Lord Avebury, *Marriage, Totemism, and Religion*, 1911, passim.

not that these material objects themselves, but their corresponding phantasmal shapes, might, when disembodied, accompany the departed warrior or huntsman on his journey to the spirit-world[1]. In the earliest times, when the dead man was thought to be merely asleep, it may have been believed that the actual objects were of service, but at a later period, when it was recognized that the soul had actually left the body, the weapons were burnt, or perchance broken, before being interred. The precise mode of transmission of the simulacral forms to the dead man's service was left in vague suspense, but the duty was clearly understood. The spirit of the weapon or ornament must be set free; the ghost desired the immaterial wraiths or shadows, not the solid earthly utensils. Mr Grant Allen has ingeniously, and with considerable force, contended that the two faiths may be correlated with the Long-Barrow Period and the Round-Barrow Period respectively. During the former age, when inhumation was in fashion, the life of the grave was considered to be as material and real as life on the earth, and the weapons would serve equally well for both worlds. Among the cremationists of the Bronze Age who imagined the existence of "a realm of incorporeal disembodied spirits," the ghost was conceived to be immaterial, therefore the weapons were broken or charred with fire[2]. It must further be noted that Mr Grant Allen, along with some other writers, does not altogether accept Professor Tylor's theory of animism. He does not believe that the ideas involved in animism are demonstrably primitive[3], and, following in the footsteps of Herbert Spencer, he seeks the origin of religion in ancestor-worship and its associated ancestral ghosts. According to this hypothesis, objects were first placed in, or on, the grave, to propitiate the dead. As fear of the corpse gradually diminished, respect became the dominant idea, and ghost-worship and shade-worship were established. Between this "Humanist" school of thought, and that of Animism, as represented by Professor Tylor and Professor Frazer, a reconciliation may, to

[1] *Ibid.* p. 487.

[2] Cf. Tylor, *op. cit.* I. p. 485 with *Evol. of Idea of God*, pp. 30–31. See also J. J. A. Worsaae, *Pre-history of the North*, H. F. M. Simpson, 1886, p. 37.

[3] *Evol. of Idea of God*, p. 156.

some extent, be effected[1]. We may perhaps look upon ancestor-worship as a sub-division of the animistic belief, and as tending towards a higher plane of religion. Professor Frazer, in his work on *Totemism and Exogamy*, has cleared the ground by showing that totemism, which has often been regarded as a primitive religion, is only occasionally found in connection with the doctrine of external souls. In pure totemism, the totems are in no sense deities, to be propitiated by offerings or sacrifices. Professor Westermarck declares that there is no justification in facts for regarding the worship of the dead as "the root of every religion." The spirits of the dead were not originally conceived as the only supernatural agents existing. Whichever be considered the primitive type of religion is a matter which will not greatly affect our present review of the facts of continuity. Nor need we feel much concerned with a third claim—that certain races may have reached the pastoral stage of society without passing through the nomadic stage, and may have been worshippers of the sun or some of the other external powers of Nature without embracing animism.

From the animistic side itself, Professor Tylor has uttered a significant warning against straining the theory. While in the vast number of cases, the idea of object-souls is, he informs us, both clear and explicit, yet it is notorious that there are peoples who sacrifice property or deposit offerings to the dead from other motives. Affection, fancy, or symbolism, a desire to abandon the dead man's property, anxiety to appease the

[1] *Ibid.* p. 6. On the general question, reference should be made to Chapter iv. of the same work, and to H. Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, III. ch. i. et passim. Cf. J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 1890, 2 vols., passim; *Totemism and Exogamy*, I. p. 204; II. pp. 148 n., 327; IV. p. 32 etc.; Lord Avebury, *Origin of Civilisation*, 6th edition, 1902, chaps. vi., vii., viii.; E. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1908, II. ch. xlvii.; A. Lang, *Origins of Religion*, R.P.A. edition, 1908, ch. xii.; G. Tyrrell, *The Faith of the Millions*, 1901, pp. 215–76; L. Hopf, *The Human Species*, authorized English edition, 1909, pp. 308–313; E. Metchnikoff, *Nature of Man*, tr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, 1906, ch. vii. See also *Athenaeum*, 5 June 1909, pp. 665–6. For a criticism from the mythological standpoint, see J. M. Robertson, *Christianity and Mythology*, 1900, pp. 40–51, 71–8; A. E. Crawley, *Origin and Function of Religion* (*Sociological Papers:* Sociol. Soc.), 1907, pp. 243–277. The report of a valuable discussion is appended. S. Reinach, *Orpheus, Histoire Générale des Religions*, 1909, ch. i.; W. Crooke, in *Nature*, LXXXIV. pp. 414–5.

hovering ghost, may each, in particular cases, be an efficient motive[1]. Again, although the animistic conception, so far as primitive peoples were concerned, was world-wide in its extent, yet, in our day, and among civilized folk, the system seems to be drawing in its outposts. It has outlived the belief in the objective reality of apparitional souls or ghosts; the notion of the souls of beasts is similarly being left behind. The central position is now held by the doctrine of the human soul[2].

A still more modern theory, the psychological, is put forward by Mr A. E. Crawley, in his recent work, *The Idea of the Soul.* Mr Crawley considers that the world of spirits is a mental world, and that the soul itself is "the mental duplicate of reality." As soon as man had the power of perception to enable him to form a memory-image, he possessed a soul. The mental replica of the object perceived was, in the earlier stages of savage life, concrete, though immaterial; at a later period, under the influence of language and science, abstractions were formed. One is bound to add that Mr Crawley's theory does not seem to meet with general approbation, though it will have to be reckoned with in all future discussions.

We shall expect, from these preliminary observations, to encounter various gradations of belief as we proceed to consider the evidence for continuity of custom respecting burial gifts. In order that the forest may not lose its importance by being considered in detail, tree by tree, let us keep to our proposed classification, and glance first at the practice of burying weapons and other useful objects with the dead. Though the custom was not a marked feature of the Long-Barrow Period, the original inspiration dates from that age at least. The Round-Barrow epoch, however, was pre-eminently associated with the burial of weapons and utensils. A rough enumeration made by Canon Greenwell showed that about one-fifth of the barrows which he had opened contained implements of some kind, the commonest materials employed in the manufacture being stone, bronze, or horn. To be exact, out of 379 burials by inhumation or cremation, 77 had associated implements[3]. A study of the

[1] Tylor, *op. cit.* I. pp. 483–4.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 501.

[3] W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, p. 51.

researches of Mortimer and Pitt-Rivers will give similar results. Nor when we trace the story onwards to the advent of Christianity, does the force of custom diminish, even if its direction becomes slightly changed. Flint scrapers and useful instruments of many kinds are turned out of graves belonging to the Roman period, just as Early Iron Age burials yield corresponding relics. A fragment of a flint celt was found with a Late Roman or Early Saxon burial at Leicester[1], while a Saxon grave at Ash, in Kent, yielded a polished celt, together with a Roman fibula[2]. The celt, in this instance, was evidently an heirloom from an earlier period, and had been regarded by its finder with superstitious reverence. One need scarcely recall the celebrated Saxon tumulus in Taplow churchyard, Buckinghamshire (p. 81 *supra*), which contained, in addition to Anglo-Saxon relics of the ordinary kind, flint flakes, cores, and scrapers[3]. On the Continent, flint arrow-heads are frequently found with Merovingian remains dating from the fifth to the eighth centuries of our era. In one case, an iron sword of the Frankish period accompanied the arrow-heads. Such occurrences are not well-attested with respect to Britain, though the collocation of flint and bronze articles is frequent[4]. The most remarkable instance of the survival of celt-burial is that supplied by the tumulus in Flanders, described by Evans. Within this barrow, arranged in a circle around the body, the mourners had placed six celts in an upright position. The celts, seemingly of different ages, had been gathered from the surface of the soil, and deposited within the tomb as amulets[5]. There can be little doubt, however, that the custom, thus shorn of its primary significance, was once the expression of a deep conviction of service. An ancient Vedic hymn, or dirge, has the words, "Take not the bow from the hand of him who lies dead." Does not also Ossian give instructions to Oscar on this very subject? "Remember, my son, to place this sword, this bow, the horn of my deer, within that dark and narrow home, whose mark is one grey stone[6]." When

[1] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 144.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.* XL. 1884, p. 63.
[4] *Anc. Stone Impts*, pp. 282–3, 397.
[5] *Ibid.* pp. 144–5.
[6] J. Macpherson, *Ossian*, 1773, I. p. 290.

we observe that parallel ideas are actually common the world over, we shall be inclined to believe that Macpherson has here recovered a bit of genuine Celtic tradition. Thus, the Greenlanders inter bows and other weapons with the dead, the Turanians of Eastern Asia bury axes, flints, and food, and supply the deceased warrior with a spear that he may be ready for future combat[1].

There is no need to press this point, but having carried the custom to Saxon times, when objects of stone still survived along with such burial relics as iron swords, daggers, and knives, let us consider one or two later observances. In Mediaeval days, burial in armour was considered most honourable. Not seldom, the warriors lay uncoffined, their shroud a panoply of iron. Their arms and weapons, again, were suspended over the tomb. This practice lasted a long time, and allusion to it may be found in Shakespeare. Laertes, speaking of the burial of his father Polonius, complains of

> "his obscure funeral,
> No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones[2]."

And Iden, in the second part of *Henry VI.*, inquires,

> "Is't Cade that I have slain, that monstrous traitor?
> Sword, I will hallow thee for this thy deed,
> And hang thee o'er my tomb when I am dead[3]."

Every ecclesiologist is familiar with such arms and accoutrements as are here mentioned. Dr J. C. Cox has enumerated churches where personal armour is still preserved[4]. No further digression can be made here, but the reader may again be reminded that many armorial relics belong to a later period, and are counterfeits which constituted part of the undertaker's trappings (cf. p. 159 *supra*). One attenuated survival lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century in the form of square or lozenge-shaped hatchments (= "achievements"), made of wood. On these wooden shields, which, after the funeral, were nailed up in the church, were blazoned the coats-of-arms borne

[1] Metchnikoff, *op. cit.* p. 130.
[2] *Hamlet*, Act IV. Sc. 5.
[3] 2 *K. Henry VI.*, Act IV. Sc. 10.
[4] J. C. Cox, in *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 174–181.

by the family of the deceased person. The most recent spectacle of this kind, surprisingly belated, was witnessed at the church of Hunmanby, in the East Riding, during the year 1897[1].

Strangest of all the warrior superstitions was that exemplified in the ceremony of offering food to weapons. The custom, which is plainly traceable to pagan ideas of worship, continued without interruption, we are assured, until the reign of Elizabeth. One instance must suffice. Sir Howel-y-Furyall, known to his fellows as "Sir Howel of the Battle-axe," a weapon which he wielded bravely at Poitiers, ordained that his axe should be hung up in the Tower of London, and a "messe of meat" served before it daily. The injunction was obeyed, and each day, after the rite had been completed, the food was distributed to beggars[2].

Arms and food do not, however, complete our list of serviceable gifts to the dead. Among implements of this nature must be reckoned divers kinds of fire-producers. Excavations have shown that flint and iron pyrites were occasionally concealed in round barrows, while, in the mounds of later periods, a piece of iron replaced the customary mineral nodule. These ignition agents, the forerunners of our "strike-a-lights" and tinder boxes, are found so late as the Saxon period. Certain small "nests" of chipped flints occurring in Merovingian, Frankish, and Saxon sepulchres, are also believed by some authorities to have been intended for fire-kindlers[3], by means of which the departed spirit could be provided with cheerful warmth. To the present writer this theory is not entirely satisfactory, at least as regards the later developments of the practice. The cases just cited seem to be analogous to those described by Pitt-Rivers, who repeatedly found, in British barrows, urns filled with chips of flint[4]. In a notable barrow at Winkelbury Hill, on a Northern spur of the Wiltshire Downs, not only was the urn packed with

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XII. p. 474; see also same volume, pp. 29, 112, 193, 517.

[2] E. A. Kilner, *Four Welsh Counties*, 1891, p. 129.

[3] *Anc. Stone Impts*, pp. 282–3, 397. For records of flint and pyrites, see e.g. *Anc. Stone Impts*, pp. 16, 313–4; *Vict. Hist. of Bedfordshire*, 1904, I. p. 169.

[4] Gen. A. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, II. 1888, pp. 34, 42, 252, 258.

flakes, but it was surrounded by a mass of similar objects[1]. Besides the flakes placed in the cist or urn itself, we have to take into account the very common occurrence of flint spalls in the body of the mound, a sight familiar to the barrow-digger. The number of chips is often out of all proportion to what might be incidentally brought together in piling up the substance of the mound from the surface soil. They were evidently struck off for the particular occasion. Now, although the germ of the ceremony may be discoverable in the burial of a trimmed flint and a lump of iron pyrites, there is no manifest virtue in the multiplication of the chips. Each tribesman may indeed have thrown in his tributary flint, or perhaps a handful of small flakes, but the intention would scarcely be to increase the opportunities of procuring fire. Rather do the chips seem to represent some esoteric doctrine, such as that which was held by the primitive Lapps. Hidden in the flint lies the spark, the emblem of life and animation, ready to burst forth. The scattered flakes of flint were therefore probably the proofs, not alone of dutiful respect, but of a strong faith that the dead man was merely asleep, that his spirit would return. Pliny's *Natural History* has been credited with the statement that Northern peoples used to throw flint chippings into graves in order to confine the dead within those dark dominions. Pliny does, indeed, describe certain stones that consume dead bodies, and other kinds that have the power to preserve the corpse, and to turn it into stone[2]. But the reference to the flint flakes, as commonly given, is bibliographically incorrect, and, although the passage may exist, I have not been successful in finding it. Except for the sake of the reason assigned to the custom, the passage is unimportant, since we possess actual relics as a testimony of the practice. What is of more interest is the fact that we have a reference to the custom as apparently existing in Shakespeare's day. When Ophelia is about to be buried, the surly priest makes complaint:

> "She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
> Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
> Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her[3]."

[1] Pitt-Rivers, *op. cit.* p. 4.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, L. xxxvi. cc. 17, 28.

[3] *Hamlet*, Act v. Sc. 1.

From this passage it seems clear that a ceremony, which, if I interpret it aright, was originally indicative of respect, had degenerated into a mark of disgrace. The potsherds and flint chips were known to be a mark of heathen burial, and were therefore reprobated by Christians, without any inquiry as to their purport. There is an alternative explanation: the idea of laying the evil spirit, so that it should not wander abroad and annoy the living, may at some time have been operative. If this assumption be well founded, it might be urged that the priest had caught an echo of the superstition, and actually believed that the ghost of a suicide might return. The usual annotation of the lines, to the effect that Ophelia is worthy only of pagan burial, comes a little short of the whole truth, and one of these ideas—respect or fear—is required to round off the meaning. In support of this view, the case of the Czechs is apposite. When returning from a funeral, it is the custom of this folk to throw stones, mud, and hot coals in the direction of the grave to deter the spirit from following the burial party[1]. Again, the purpose of wearing mourning is believed to have arisen from attempts to disguise the person, so that pursuit by the dead may be evaded; or, as Mr E. S. Hartland contends, the intention was to express sorrow and abasement, so as to deprecate the malice of the disembodied spirit[2]. Yet, in spite of these by-theories, one is led to believe that the earlier intention of the funeral flints was to express honour and respect, though the feeling may have been tinged with wholesome fear. To this extent the theory of ancestor-worship, as opposed to that of animism, receives some confirmation.

A passage occurring in Herodotus has been noted as throwing some light on the custom, while not affording an actual explanation. The writer is describing the ceremony of purification observed after funerals by the Scythians in Europe. A cavity

[1] S. Baring-Gould, *The Deserts of Southern France*, 1894, I. p. 207. See also a valuable essay in J. G. Frazer's *Psyche's Task,...the Growth of Superstition*, 1909, pp. 52–81.

[2] S. Baring-Gould, *op. cit.* p. 207. Cf. methods described by Leo Frobenius, *Childhood of Man*, ed. A. H. Keane, 1909, pp. 158–63; E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, 2nd edition 1889, p. 237. Cf. E. S. Hartland, at Brit. Assoc. Meeting, 1910 (*Nature*, LXXXV. p. 24).

was made, or a dish was placed in the middle of a specially constructed tent. Into this hollow they threw stones heated to a transparent brightness (λίθους ἐκ πυρὸς διαφανέας ἐσβάλλουσι ἐς σκάφην)[1]. This description, however, does not really apply to the rite which we are considering, for Herodotus goes on to say that hemp-seed is put on the red-hot stones. The intention was to prepare a kind of vapour bath, and also probably to induce intoxication[2]. In other words, the heated stones seem to have been our familiar "pot-boilers," common on all prehistoric camping-grounds, and capable of a purely industrial explanation, though often applied to a ceremonial purpose.

Returning to the shards alluded to by the priest at Ophelia's grave, we note, as an illustration, that Pitt-Rivers found considerable quantities of broken pottery in the Romano-British graves of Dorset and Wiltshire. A remarkable coincidence must now be mentioned. Douglas, writing his *Nenia Britannica* in 1793, had noticed that pebbles and fragments of pottery were often mixed with the earth which had been scattered over the corpses in Saxon graves. The shards were generally of more ancient date than the interment[3]. Douglas had lighted upon the passage in *Hamlet*, already quoted, and had connected it with the superstitious Saxon practice. Over half a century later, Mr W. M. Wylie, who was exploring Saxon graves at Fairford, in Gloucestershire, came upon quantities of similar burial shards. The vessels which had furnished the fragments had not been newly broken for the occasion, since the pieces did not correspond, but had been previously collected and kept in readiness. Along with these potsherds were found pebbles that had been fired, as well as scoriae from iron smeltings, obtained perhaps from the neighbourhood of Cirencester, not

[1] Herodotus, l. IV. (Melpomene), c. 73. Cf. Translation in Isaac Taylor's edition, 1829, p. 297.

[2] Canon G. Rawlinson, *Hist. of Herodotus*, 4th edition, 1880, III. pp. 63–4. Rawlinson argues (III. pp. 198–200) that the Scythians were not Slavs, Celts, or Teutons, but a distinct race, and (III. pp. 201–8) that Scythia did not extend so far West as to touch the present Germany.

[3] J. Douglas, *Nenia Britannica*, 1793, p. 10. Cf. Pitt-Rivers, *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II. pp. 29, 33; IV. pp. 148–157, 164–5.

far away[1]. After referring to the description of the Scythian custom, which has just been quoted from Herodotus, and after making a half-hearted attempt to connect the Scythians with the Northern Teutons, Wylie cites the now-famous lines from *Hamlet*. That Wylie should have independently come to the same conclusion as Douglas, and should have called attention to the same Shakespearean allusion, is very noteworthy, for he had never read Douglas's work[2].

Although we are considering relics which were judged to be of use to the dead, we have transgressed our limits, and have been compelled to glance at the ceremonial aspect. Yet before we can safely return to the main inquiry, we must notice some instances of survival in this matter of potsherds. Numerous records tend to show that the deposition of pieces of earthenware in Christian graves was not an uncommon practice during the Middle Ages. At once, however, we must make a reservation: the scraps of pottery may, to some extent, represent vessels in which charcoal had been deposited, but which afterwards were fractured by the sexton's spade. For the broken pottery is sometimes, but not always, associated with charcoal, while, as we shall see, the charcoal is often found alone. The Rev. R. Ashington Bullen found traces of the custom at Little Stukeley, Huntingdonshire. At a depth of 4½ feet, graves were found to contain fragments of Mediaeval pottery, possessing a greenish glaze, but no charcoal was discovered[3]. Canon Atkinson states that potsherds were also found near Dunsley chapel, Yorkshire, which was probably demolished prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries. This capable antiquary, whose eye was well trained for the work, observed charcoal and broken crocks in abundance in the old churchyard graves of Danby-in-Cleveland. The charcoal occurred in lumps of the size of a small bean. Occasionally, out of half a spade-graft of mould brought to the surface, from one-third to one-half would be

[1] W. M. Wylie, *Fairford Graves*, 1852, pp. 24–5. Pitt-Rivers records the finding of worn pebbles in a barrow: *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II. p. 33.

[2] J. Y. Akerman, *Remains of Saxon Pagandom*, 1853, pp. xvi, xvii; Baron J. de Baye, *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, tr. J. B. Harbottle, 1893, pp. 119–20, makes the same statement.

[3] R. A. Bullen, *Harlyn Bay*, 1902, p. 24.

principally charcoal. Fragments of coarse red pottery, partly glazed on the interior surface, and without doubt of Mediaeval age, were also constantly lighted upon. About a wheelbarrow full of shards was turned up within a quarter of a century, few graves being dug without some scraps being encountered. The charcoal and the pottery were not actually found in contact, nevertheless Canon Atkinson believed that charcoal, in the form of live coals [*Qy* live charcoal, i.e. "coal" in the older sense?] had been placed in earthen vessels. The reason for this opinion is not given, nor does the hypothesis harmonize with all the related facts. Canon Atkinson, while granting that the idea of purificatory energy may have underlain the custom, stated that collateral evidences showed a desire to keep the spirit in abeyance[1]. These opinions have been dealt with in advance; it remains to be noted that Danby churchyard seems once to have formed part of an open field. "That pagan Danes were laid to their rest there I make no doubt; and that they were the fore-elders of a Christianized generation or series of generations is equally certain[2]." These details, though interesting, are unimportant; the essential matter is that the bulk of the pottery was of Mediaeval date—the narrator allows for exceptions—and must therefore have been employed in Christian times (see p. 287 *supra*). The practice had possibly a direct lineal descent from the Bronze Age. In one barrow belonging to that period, a deposit of burnt bones was underlain by wood, and was covered with charcoal and wood ashes, probably the remains of the funeral pile[3]. On the other hand, a barrow which was opened by Canon Atkinson contained pieces of charcoal, varying in size from a bean to a nutmeg, scattered through the material of the mound[4]. Other cases might be given from the investigations of Pitt-Rivers. Late Frankish cemeteries have yielded fragments of charcoal[5], and the same may be said of Mediaeval graves in France[6]. The accidentals of cremation

[1] J. C. Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, 2nd edition, 1891, pp. 213–5, 220.

[2] Atkinson, *op. cit.* p. 432.

[3] *Guide to Bronze Age*, pp. 60–61.

[4] Atkinson, *op. cit.* p. 220. Cf. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, p. xl; Pitt-Rivers, *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II. pp. 33–36, 45.

[5] Greenwell, *British Barrows*, p. 29.

[6] *Archaeologia*, XXXV. pp. 301–3.

ceremonies clearly survived the essentials, and a pagan custom was engrafted on Christian rite. The Mediaeval churchman's explanation of the charcoal is thus given by Durandus: *Carbones in testimonium, quod terra illa ad communes usus amplius redigi non potest, plus enim durat carbo sub terra quam aliud*[1]; that is: Charcoal is employed to show that the earth can no longer be put to ordinary uses, because charcoal endures underground longer than any other substance.

Is there any known instance of the actual use of flint flakes at Christian funerals? Research has so far given a negative reply, but a scrap or two of evidence may be produced. Canon Atkinson found flint chippings and even the ruder kinds of implements in the churchyards of Cleveland[2]. The present writer picked up a flint flake from a newly-dug grave at Northolt, Middlesex, and another, a long, thin specimen, with a "back ridge," at Warlingham churchyard, Surrey. The risks of drawing an inference from such isolated occurrences as these are both numerous and patent. The churchyard was once part of the open country, and these flakes might, perhaps, originally have been derived from the surface soil. Again, chips of a rough kind fall as waste when flint is dressed and squared for church walls. A sufficient knowledge of the properties of modern and ancient flakes enables the observer to dismiss this source of error, though it must be stated that both at Warlingham and Northolt flint forms a portion of the structural materials. Now the two flakes described were not whitened by exposure and dissolution of the colloidal portion of the silica. They had retained their old unpatinated surface, save that a polish had been acquired; one may therefore conclude that they had lain for a considerable period in a close impervious clay or loam. Probably they had been dug from a depth of two or three feet below the surface. The specimens were certainly ancient. Should instances of this nature be recorded

[1] Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, l. VII. c. 37. In the same way Durandus states that ivy and laurel were used because they were typical of eternal life. These plausible explanations have received acute comment in *Archaeologia*, XXXV. pp. 301–3.

[2] *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, p. 157.

with a fair degree of frequency, the meaning might be deciphered in either of two ways: the adaptation of a pagan site for a Christian place of worship, or the casting of flint chips into a Christian grave. Whether the occurrence of quantities of ancient splinters of flint near a churchyard, as at St Paul's Cray, Kent, must be interpreted in the same manner, is not so clear. I prefer to await further records, which are, from the nature of the case, difficult to procure. The flints are mysterious witnesses, at most, and the sceptic may justly scorn their testimony, if asked to consider these objects alone. But the triad of flints, potsherds, and charcoal, stands moderately firm. Concerning the charcoal, we have fortunately, apart from the relics, the words of Durandus to help us to read the ostensible meaning. But assume that we were unaware of the Mediaeval character of some of the graveyard pottery, who would believe that the custom of interring potsherds was observed at so late a period? The sceptic would say that the scraps represented prehistoric urns accidentally occurring in the churchyard soil. We should be justified in refusing our assent at the outset, but we should have to reconsider the matter when we found that the habit of breaking vessels and utensils over the dead is common among many races[1]. Moreover, there is a record, within the last thirty years, of a Lincolnshire woman's breaking pottery over her husband's grave, because she had forgotten to inter the perfect vessels with the body. At present, then, we must allow that there is a possible preliminary case in favour of the flints, if these should be now and again detected.

Let us summarize the last few paragraphs. The original purpose of placing apparently useless potsherds with the dead was to provide the departed tribesman with the spiritual utensils thus represented, the spirit-forms having been liberated by the breaking of the vessels. Similarly, the charcoal, the calcined pebbles or "pot-boilers," and the few scraps of flint, would supply him with fire, first material, afterwards spiritual. Thus he had the means of making a fire, and of carrying water and hot embers. "Poor indeed," says Professor T. Rupert Jones,

[1] *Prim. Culture*, I. p. 483 n. (Long list of authorities given.)

"was the greatest of the heroes, on his dreary death-path, who had not 'a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit' (Isa. xxx. 14)[1]." So far, the theory agrees well with the explanation given respecting votive implements and weapons. Moreover, we can see how the idea of "laying the spirit" with hot stones and fractured flints may have arisen. The homeless ghost would be happy only when fealty had been proved by funeral gifts. Careless or daring folk who neglected to pay the tribute would, in dreams, receive visits from the disembodied dead. Where no affection or respect existed, experience might teach that formal adherence to custom was prudent. The explanation based on actual needs seems only to suffice for those cases where the flint and earthenware gifts are solitary, or at any rate, few, like the celts and arrow-heads. Wherever the flint flakes are counted by scores, and the potsherds, broken, it may be, from vessels made expressly for the sepulchre, are representative of many individual pieces of pottery, the idea involved seems to be, not mere utility, but dutiful respect, tempered, as some will have it, with fear.

It may be submitted that, just as the Bedouin Arabs are wont to set up groups of stones around the burial-place of a fakir, so the chief members of a prehistoric tribe, each carrying his portion, produced the accumulation of flint spalls. True; but this does not support the suggested explanation that the flakes were strike-a-lights. So soon as the multiplication of fire-kindlers—if we assume that the flakes were at first of this nature—reached to the extent of filling an urn or cist, utility must have been the waning, and reverence the waxing principle. The idea that material objects could benefit the dead lingered, it is true, for ages, and in some half-hearted manner persisted, as we shall see, until our own day, but it was ultimately overpowered by the growth of symbolical rites. It remains to notice Pitt-Rivers' theory that the broken pottery may have been buried to mark the site of a barrow, but how this mode of indication could be effective that cautious and experienced investigator does not suggest. In a boundary tumulus, entombed

[1] Quoted by R. A. Bullen, *Harlyn Bay*, p. 23 n.

pottery might be significant, but even there, it could not form a visible memorial.

Reverting for a moment to the subject of fire-kindlers, I would remark that many of the objects known to archaeologists as flint "scrapers" were probably ignition agents[1]. Consequently, to call such flints "thumb-scrapers," or oval scrapers, as is often done by the barrow-digger, is to push aside a debateable question by means of an assumption. Scrapers they may have been, but it is at least permissible to believe that they were also fire-producers. In due time, the strike-a-light became a specialized article, but both scraper and fire-kindler continued to find a place in the grave. Pliny speaks of the discovery of mirrors and "body-scrapers" (*specula quoque, et strigiles*)[2], in ancient tombs. These strigils, which Philemon Holland quaintly renders "currycombes[3]," and Littré, as *instruments pour les oreilles*[4], were actually, in Roman days, the scrapers of horn or metal, used by the bather to remove impurities from the skin. Thus, considered as a scraper, the strigil reaches back to the rounded flint with trimmed edges, and forward to the Mediaeval "sleeker" of stone or metal, employed by the currier in tawing hides. As a "slick-stone" of black glass, degraded, doubtless, to the ornamental stage, the object again appears in Islay, associated with a burial of the Viking period[5]. Later records of the scraper, and of the strike-a-light, definitely illustrative of the theory of funeral gifts, seem to be lacking.

A survival of the custom of furnishing the dead with fire-kindlers is partially traceable in the ancient practice of depositing a candle in the grave, to light the dead man on his way. In Ireland a hammer was also interred, to enable the deceased person to knock at the gates of Purgatory, while a sixpenny piece secured admission[6]. Within the last generation

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 190–3.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. XXXVI. c. 27. The practice was common in the Late-Celtic period. (See *Archaeologia*, 1909, LXI. pp. 329–346.)

[3] P. Holland, edition of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.*, 1601, II. p. 587.

[4] É. Littré, translation of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.*, 1850, t. II. p. 521.

[5] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 422.

[6] Prof. G. Stephens, cited by Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, pp. 213–5.

a native of Cleveland was buried with a candle for the purpose of obtaining light, a bottle of wine for nourishment, and a penny to pay the ferryman[1]. The village of Bucklebury, Berkshire, by the way, supplies an instance of a different kind; in a grave apparently modern, two bottles of beer had been placed but no candle[2]! In Lincolnshire a groat, "a mug and a jug," were placed in the coffin. The Lincolnshire widow, who had forgotten to deposit the mug and the jug in the grave, broke the crockery, as we have seen (p. 292 *supra*), and laid the fragments on the mound. In one case, where a bottle, full of pins, was found in a recently opened grave, the explanation can probably be found in sympathetic magic. The pins had been used to touch warts on the skin, and the operative belief was either that the warts were transferred to the dead person, or that, as the pins rusted, the warts would die away. The former explanation is the more likely, else the pins might as well have been buried anywhere. Mr England Howlett asserts that the burial of a candle in the coffin was once common. He throws doubt on the theory of the provision of light for the dead, and claims that the candle was emblematic of an extinguished life. Support for this new theory is sought in the custom of immuring candles in the foundation of churches and houses, of which, Mr Howlett says, many examples are known[3]. Owing to the amount of correlative evidence bearing on the question of fire-kindlers and fire-worship, I prefer to regard the candle as representing the attenuated symbolism of light and heat.

Even while referring to candles, we have been forced to observe another burial-gift—the coin placed in the hand or mouth. Since the coin had originally a supposed useful purpose, a few words may be devoted to it. The practice is at least as old as the time of the ancient Greeks, who were accustomed to place an obolus in the dead person's mouth. To a classic origin, however, in the ordinary sense of the term, the custom cannot

[1] S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, new edition, 1888, pp. 560–1.

[2] *Folk-Lore*, x. p. 253. The Lincolnshire example is given in Vol. ix. p. 187. The burial of pins is recorded in *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*, ed. W. Andrews, 1897, p. 248.

[3] E. Howlett, in *Curious Church Customs*, pp. 42–3.

be limited. It prevailed in pagan Germany[1], and in Christian England. Professor Tylor cites examples from several countries, and gives a list of authorities. De Groot states that the silver coin deposited in the mouth of the corpse by the Chinese has replaced the earlier cowrie, just as it has superseded the cowrie for purposes of currency[2]. The custom of coin-burial was well known to the Romano-Britons, as is proved by the excavations of General Pitt-Rivers in Cranborne Chase. We are compelled, therefore, to postulate a more extended history than Greece or Rome would afford. Even in England the belief must have been profound, even touching, in its sincerity. Silver coins are occasionally dug up in English churchyards, and the tradition runs that such money had originally been placed in the mouth of the corpse[3]. Evidence of this kind prevents a too confident acceptance of Mr Romilly Allen's conclusion that the idea of Charon's penny ceased with the introduction of Christianity[4]. The spirit, if not the precise tradition, of the ancient custom long survived with some intensity. Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff relates how an old Burgundian woman, being asked why she had placed a sou in the hand of a dead child, replied, *C'est pour payer le trajet à Charon.* The narrator supposes, with fair reason, that this incident revealed the lasting influence of Roman civilization over the Gaulish people[5]. The woman may have heard, or read, the classic tradition, but this is rather improbable. Folk-memory had seemingly retained the orthodox explanation, but the custom itself may go back to the time when the newly invented coin replaced some cruder amulet. From what centre, or centres, the belief in the virtue of the coin was transmitted, is at present unknown.

An illustration drawn from the writings of Mr Thomas Hardy will doubtless be pardoned, since much genuine Wessex folk-lore has been presented to us in the garb of fiction by that shrewd

[1] B. Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, 1851, I. p. 291.

[2] *Prim. Culture*, I. p. 494. J. J. M. De Groot, *Religious Systems of China*, 1892, pp. 278–9.

[3] *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, pp. 213–5.

[4] J. Romilly Allen, *Mon. Hist. of Early Brit. Church*, 1889, p. 34.

[5] Sir M. G. Duff, *Notes from a Diary*, 1904, I. p. 253. Cf. P. G. Hamerton, *Round my House*, 1876, p. 254.

observer and archaeologist. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* [i.e. Dorchester], after having been told of the death of Mrs Henchard, the reader is treated to a rustic gossip on death in general. Mrs Cuxsom gives her own little commentary, and then proceeds to quote the words of her dead neighbour: "And there's four ounce pennies, the heaviest I could find, a-tied up in bits of linen, for weights—two for my right eye, and two for my left. And when you've used 'em, and my eyes don't open no more, bury the pennies, good souls, and don't ye go spending 'em, for I shouldn't like it." In the sequel, a servant buries the coins in the garden, but Christopher Coney digs them up and spends them. One of the listeners, Solomon Longways, excuses this action, and can see "no treason in it," but the general verdict ran: "'Twas a cannibal deed[1]."

Now we may be certain that this conversation describes, in all essential details, the Wessex superstition. Within our own times, Northumbrian folk were wont to bury a penny piece just under the soil of a newly-made grave. And it is a very common belief that misfortune will follow him who desecrates the coin —the ferryman's penny—by ignoble use. If, as is probable, the "eye-coin" be the genuine representative of this penny, it has degenerated into a humble accessory of the death-chamber; it is not now even deposited in the grave. Nevertheless, the segregated coin must not be put again to everyday uses. Well did Jowett of Balliol in luminous phrase speak of "underground religion," that strain of superstition which cannot be banished from the peasant mind. Nor, indeed, does orthodoxy, at least as understood by provincial or unthinking folk, raise any serious demur to the observance.

We cannot accept as adequate the superficial explanation that the penny is simply used to close the eyes. This is the immediate purpose, of course, but it does not explain why a penny, though certainly an object of convenient size and shape, should alone be used. Least of all does it account for the placing of coins in the mouth, or of burying money in the grave. Norwegian folk-lore supplies us with a curious correlative. When

[1] T. Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, 1895, pp. 143–4. Cf. H. M. Neville, *A Corner in the North*, 1909, p. 102; *Folk-Lore*, XX. pp. 209–10.

the Norwegian peasant takes earth from the churchyard to succour ailing children, he must bury silver coins in place of the stolen specific. Customs like these carry us back, by almost imperceptible transitions, to the building of the British barrow, and to the interment therein of flawless arrow-head or fractured celt. Following the centuries forward, we may dimly surmise why the various changes took place; glancing back, we marvel that the beliefs have been clung to so tenaciously.

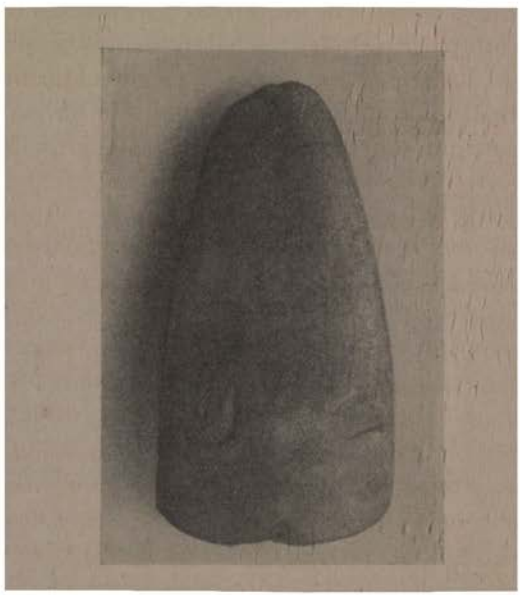

FIG. 57. Grave-celt, of polished flint, from Murols, Puy-de-Dôme (Author's collection). Length 2¼″; greatest width 1⅛″.

We must now leave our first group of objects—the axes, the knives, the arrow-tips, with fire-kindlers, pottery, querns, spindle-whorls, and all similar appliances, in order to give some attention to the next division of the relics. This class, it will be remembered, comprises amulets, talismans, and symbolical objects. Some difficulty arises when we try to separate these from the purely decorative articles, but there are certain relics whose purpose does not seem to admit of doubt. The tiny polished celts, of which an example from Puy de Dôme is shown in

Fig. 57, must have been charms. Specimens much smaller than the one illustrated are often met with. Still more convincing are the small amber axes which Professor Montelius has described as occurring in Scandinavia: these cannot have had any economical use.

Examples of objects wholly symbolical or protective are furnished by the white or transparent pebbles frequently found in ancient graves. In the innermost chamber of a Scottish cairn opened by Dr Angus Smith, at Achnacree, near Loch Etive, a row of quartz pebbles, each larger than a walnut, was seen displayed on a granite ledge. Canon Greenwell, who examined cairns containing similar objects near Crinan, thought that the stones had a symbolical meaning[1]. Similarly, Mr Reddie Mallett discovered shield-shaped masses of quartz deposited in the Celtic Cemetery at Harlyn Bay, Cornwall[2]. Smooth white pebbles, sometimes five or seven in number, but never more, and usually arranged in crosses, were found in graves under the fallen ramparts of Burghead, in Elginshire[3]. The belief in the virtues of selected pebbles was of an enduring kind, for crystals of quartz and white stones ("Godstones") were commonly placed in Irish graves within recent times. In ancient Irish graves the finding of such objects is of common occurrence. Pebbles of other hues have also been discovered, representing a small colour-series[4]. The fisher-folk of Inverary have a practice, which outruns all memory, and which is independent of everything save tradition, of placing little white pebbles on the graves of their friends[5]. More might be said concerning these white stones—the symbols of justification in the Apocalypse[6], the sacred comforters of the dying Hindoo, the counters by means of which the ancient Thracians recorded their happy days[7]. We will, however, pass to a more elaborate kind of amulet, the crystal ball which is often found in Saxon graves.

[1] *Folk-Lore*, IV. 1893, p. 14; R. Munro, *Prehistoric Scotland*, 1899, p. 284.

[2] *Harlyn Bay*, p. 36.

[3] Sir J. Rhŷs, *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx*, 1891, I. pp. 344–5 (authority given).

[4] W. G. Wood-Martin, *Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland*, 1902, I. p. 329; *Pagan Ireland*, pp. 110–14.

[5] *Folk-Lore*, IV. 1893, pp. 13–14.

[6] Rev. ii. 17.

[7] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. VII. c. 40.

Sometimes the crystal is mounted with a silver band or ring, as if its owner had carried it in suspension. From a consideration of the passage in *Beowulf* respecting the value of such amulets in protecting the head from the blows of the enemy, from a knowledge that crystal pendants have, until modern times, been deemed efficacious in stanching the flow of blood, and from a study of parallel beliefs and divinations existing among various races, we conclude that these objects were prized as talismans. It is noticeable that Mr Roach Smith did not accept this interpretation, and regarded the balls simply as objects of which the use was less obvious than that of the ordinary funeral relic[1].

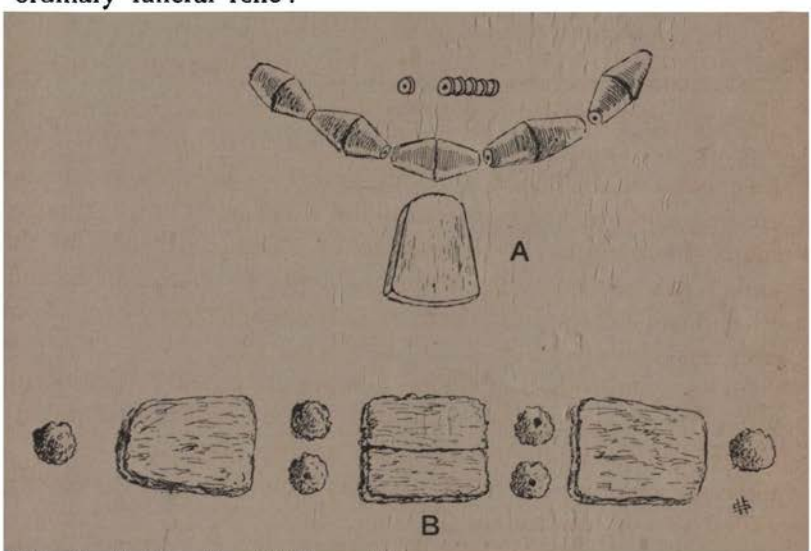

FIG. 58. Necklaces from British round barrows.

A. Barrel-shaped jet beads and pendant of like material, with six smaller glass beads. Tan Hill, Wiltshire. Four-ninths of real size.

B. Amber beads and links, much decayed. Lake, Wiltshire. Four-ninths of real size.

Whether we ought to consider the amber beads of British barrows as charms, or, like their fellows of glass and clay, as ornaments solely, is a moot point. The abundance of the beads

[1] *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 79–83; C. Roach Smith, Introduction to Bryan Fausett's *Inventorium Sepulchrale*, 1856, p. xxvii.

increases when we reach the Saxon period. Perhaps, where they are numerous, they formed part of a necklace (Fig. 58). In more than one instance an amber bead was found attached to, or lying near, a skeleton. I am inclined to put the amber beads in a special class because of the virtues formerly assigned to this substance. Amber shielded the living from evil, and it sped the departed on their long journey. Decoration, therefore, was not the sole reason for the selection. Elton quotes an ancient Welsh poem, in which is described, with "Homeric minuteness," the amber ornaments of the British chief Gododin:

"Adorned with a wreath was the leader, the wolf of the holm;
Amber beads in ringlets encircled his temples;
Precious was the amber, and worth a banquet of wine[1]."

The amber dug out of British barrows is usually of the red variety, not blackish or honey-coloured. Much archaeological warfare has been waged as to its place of origin. Along the East coast of Britain, from Ramsgate to Aberdeen, specimens are frequently picked up, generally of a yellowish tint. A native source, however, is not perhaps to be assigned to most of the amber beads. From their great abundance in Saxon tumuli, Elton favoured the hypothesis that the main supply came from over the North Sea[2].

The supposition that amber beads were credited with occult virtues is strengthened by folk-lore. Such beads were popularly believed to render the wearer proof against witchcraft. St Eloi forbade women to wear these objects around the neck[3]. Zest is added to our inquiry by the superstition about the "lammer-beads" (Scotch, *lammer* = amber; cf. Fr. *l'ambre*), of Tweedside, which, on being dug out of ancient barrows, were worn as charms for the cure of weak eyes and sprained limbs, and were ultimately handed down as cherished heirlooms[4].

Among the other articles which seem to have been prized for magical or protective properties may be mentioned wolves'

[1] Quoted by C. I. Elton, *Origins of Eng. Hist.*, 2nd edition, 1890, p. 63.
[2] Elton, *loc. cit.* Cf. C. Roach Smith, Introd. to *Invent. Sepul.* pp. xxvi–xxvii.
[3] *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 78–9. Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. XXXVII. c. 3.
[4] W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, 1879, p. 145.

teeth and boars' tusks, perforated for suspension as charms[1]. Mention, too, must be made of a naturally perforated flint to which a fossil echinoderm (*Micraster*) was attached, found by Mr E. Lovett on the breast of a skeleton in a barrow on the Sussex Downs[2]. This last example leads us imperceptibly to our third group of funeral relics, wherein fossils occupy an important position. This third class includes articles primarily of an ornamental or decorative character. Reviewing the fossils first, we notice that primitive man had learned at an early period to collect and store up the flint echinoderms left among the residual drift of the surface over which he daily trod. We may pass by, with but a hasty glance, the fossil "sea-urchins" dug up in great numbers by Pitt-Rivers in the Romano-British villages at Rotherly (Wilts.) and Woodcuts (Dorset), since these echinoderms are believed to have served purely secular purposes, such as those of coinage[3]. In like manner the ammonites, pierced for spindle-whorls, unearthed at the Glastonbury lake-village, may be dismissed as not being graveyard specimens.

The most famous instance of the occurrence of echinoderms in burial-mounds is that recorded by Mr Worthington G. Smith from a round barrow on Dunstable Downs. The description of this discovery, which is not without pathos, is worthy of even greater renown than it has yet achieved. The barrow, on being opened, revealed the skeleton of a woman, clasping the almost perished relics of a child. One is tempted here to compare the later superstitious practice of burying an unbaptized child at the feet of an adult, to prevent the child-spirit from wandering around its former home. It has been suggested that the child may have been buried alive with its mother. Be this disquieting thought well based or not, the objects associated with the burial were of a striking nature. Besides celts and scrapers of flint,

[1] *Origins of Eng. Hist.* pp. 144–5. Cf. J. J. A. Worsaae, *Indus. Arts of Denmark*, 1882, pp. 199–200; Elworthy, *Evil Eye*, p. 203. The general use of stones, teeth, etc. as Anglo-Saxon charms is discussed in the *Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXII. 1909, pp. 134, 135–6.

[2] E. Lovett, Lecture at Horniman Museum, London, 27 March, 1909.

[3] Gen. A. L. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, 1887 etc. II. pp. 68, 78, 79–86, 93, 94, 98, 102, 103, 106 etc. Cf. *Folk-Memory*, pp. 147–9, and illustration facing p. 296; *Athenaeum*, 15 July, 1911, p. 80.

the excavators found a dozen fossil echinoderms. On extending the diggings, nearly 100 more specimens came to light, and after repeatedly shovelling and raking the soil which formed the tumulus, still more, to the number of over 200, were added to the spoils. Mr Smith, who was unfortunately not present at the first opening of the mound, concluded that the fossils had formed a border around the bodies. In his fascinating volume, *Man the Primeval Savage*, he has given us an interesting illustration of the grave as it was probably arranged before the mound was piled over it (Fig. 59). The fossils were of two species: the "Heart urchin" (*Micraster cor-anguinum*) and the "Fairy loaf" (*Echinocorys ovatus*, Leske = *Ananchytes scutatus*)[1]. A belief became somewhat generally current among archaeologists that these "urchins" had been directly obtained from the chalk. If that had been the case, the fossils would have been composed of unabraded flint, with a whitened surface, or the "tests" or outer coverings would have been of calcite, with an amorphous interior filling of chalk. But this opinion, confidently and frequently repeated, seemed to credit the Bronze Age man with much too great a familiarity with chalk fossils. It appeared strange that he should have extracted the fossils from the parent chalk by the aid of a deerhorn pick or a celt of flint or bronze. The presumption was more likely that the specimens were silicified "casts" which had been dissolved out of the chalk mass ages previously, and which, lying on, or near the surface, when the primitive settler tilled the downs for a livelihood, met with the approval of his keen eye. Accordingly, I wrote to Mr Smith, who, in a letter dated 3 May, 1909, stated that this supposition was correct—the fossils were of flint, and had been washed out of the Clay-with-Flints. In other words, they had not been derived immediately from the parent chalk.

It may be appositely remarked in this place that the fame of fossil echinoderms is well attested by the folk-name "Fairy loaf," already given, not to speak of such genuine popular terms as "Shepherd's crown" or "Shepherd's helmet" (*Echinocorys*), and "Sugar loaf" (*Conulus* = *Echinoconus* = *Galerites*). Concerning

[1] Worthington G. Smith, *Man the Primeval Savage*, 1894, pp. 334–9; also his article in *Vict. Hist. of Bedfordshire*, 1904, 1. p. 169.

the Fairy loaf, the legend runs that whoso will keep a specimen in his house shall never lack bread.

But the watchful eye of the barrow-builder saw other derelict fossils besides Micrasters and their allies. Man of the Neo-

FIG. 59. Skeletons of woman and child, surrounded by fossil echinoderms. The relics were found by Mr Worthington G. Smith in a round barrow on Dunstable Downs.

lithic and Bronze Ages, though deficient in the artistic skill of his Palaeolithic predecessor, exhibited some selective taste even in matters of daily life. Often one lights upon an implement which has been made from a particular substance chosen for its natural beauty. Thus, one perforated hammer is of a green colour; another, of gneissose rock, is banded alternately black and white; a third, from a Wiltshire barrow, contains a mass of fossil serpulae (worm-tubes). Sir John Evans, who records the last-named example, leaves it an open question whether superstition or love of beauty determined the choice[1]. While, as already suggested, the detached fossil was probably regarded as a charm, the section of such a fossil, visible on the surface of a polished celt, or the delicately moulded impression of a shell on a flint flake, was carefully left untouched, mainly for artistic reasons. One occasionally sees an axe in which a fossil remains intact, yet the tool was meant for everyday use. Scrapers, too, are often deftly fashioned from portions of a banded flint, and many arrow-heads chipped from agate or chalcedony speak of beauty as well as utility. In the course of time such objects may indeed have appealed to their owners as talismans.

Endowed, then, with acute vision which was trained to a high degree along certain lines, and gifted with the first glimmerings of artistic taste, prehistoric man learned to appreciate any conspicuous and attractive-looking fossil. That very common chalk fossil, which seems to have settled down finally to the name of *Porosphaera globularis*, and which is by general consent now regarded as a sponge, was a special favourite with men of the Barrow period. This small, spherical fossil, unfortunately nameless among common folk, occurs somewhat plentifully as a flint "pebble" in drift gravels which have originally been eroded from the chalk. Sometimes the *Porosphaera* has a natural perforation, corresponding with one of its diameters, and thus the searcher could obtain a ready-made bead. By stringing together these fossils, a necklace was formed, and of these necklaces, the "threads" of which have perished, the number of flint "beads" found in the barrows supply convincing testimony. The salient fact is that, in several recorded instances,

[1] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 227.

the fossils were found in groups; thus precluding natural agencies as a cause of their occurrence. In ordinary circumstances, the fossils would be isolated and scattered throughout the gravels

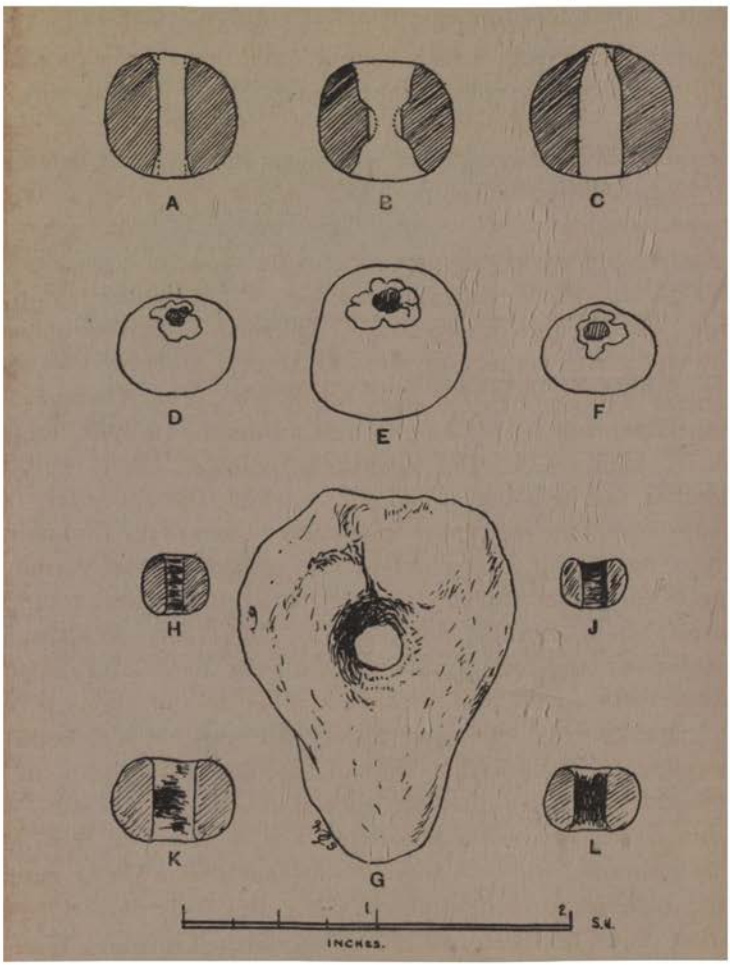

FIG. 60. Specimens of the fossil sponge *Porosphaera* (= *Coscinopora*) *globularis*, with orifices artificially enlarged.

A, B, C, sections of the fossil; **A,** with hole artificially enlarged at both ends; **B,** in the middle; **C,** at one end only. **D, E, F,** show the natural shapes of *Porosphaera*, and the attempts made to enlarge the openings. **H, J, K, L,** exhibit sections of the "beads," which contained a little organic matter, probably the remains of the ligament by which the beads were strung. **G** is a perforated fossil shell.

somewhat sparingly. Moreover, Mr James Wyatt, who examined over 200 specimens of *Porosphaera*, believed, from markings which were visible when sections were cut, that in several cases the hole had been artificially enlarged with a drill[1] (Fig. 60). To enumerate barrows which have yielded this particular fossil would be wearisome, but another globular fossil, the beautifully ornamented echinoderm known as *Cidaris*, deserves a note. Evans records his having seen specimens of this fossil bored so as to form part of a Saxon necklace, and, in other cases, to serve as spindle-whorls[2].

Among the other grave-mound fossils, those of cephalopods find a place. A considerable number of belemnites lay in a "large" [i.e. British or pre-Saxon] Dorsetshire barrow opened in the eighteenth century by Colonel Drax. Douglas, who saw the specimens, figures one of them in his *Nenia Britannica*[3]. Canon Greenwell found a portion of an ammonite lying beside a skeleton in one of the Yorkshire mounds[4]. It is well to remember that a black ammonite, of which the species is not stated, is associated with the religious ceremonies of the Brahmans, being regarded by the devout as the embodiment of Vishnu[5]. Some of the larger fish teeth, occurring as fossils, also come in our list. In a tumulus described by Dr Henry Woodward, the sides of the grave were lined with the teeth of *Lepidotus* (= *Sphaerodus*) *gigas*, a Mesozoic fish allied to the "bony pike" of North American lakes and rivers. In one case a locket-like arrangement was noticed, a kind of keyhole having been cut in the tooth[6]. I record this evidence, but not having seen the specimens referred to, cannot express an opinion on the individual example, and will merely say that the artificial nature of the hole is antecedently probable. But it is only right to add that doubt has been cast on the necessity of invoking human skill to explain certain of these orifices. Some species of boring mollusc may possibly have been the real agent. One recalls

[1] *Man, the Primeval Savage*, pp. 273–4.
[2] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 469.
[3] *Nenia Britannica*, p. 158.
[4] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 467.
[5] J. G. Frazer, *Early Hist. of the Kingship*, 1905, pp. 157–8.
[6] *Man, the Primeval Savage*, p. 398. In this connection, see H. A. Burrows, in *Proc. Geol. Assoc.*, IV. 1876, pp. 165–166.

the controversy respecting the perforated sharks' teeth of the Crag formation. To explain this feature, Mr H. A. Burrows suggested that the cavities originally represented hollows for the passage of blood-vessels, and that the perforations had been completed by subsequent friction and solution. It remains to be noted that the first collectors of fossil fish teeth lived in Palaeolithic times, since specimens, associated with flint flakes, were found at the celebrated "Palaeolithic floor" at Stoke Newington[1]. Similarly, fossil and "recent" shells, perforated for suspension, have been found in the Palaeolithic caves of France and Belgium[2]. A limestone cavern, opened by M. Dupont in the latter country in 1860, yielded a collection of fossil molluscan shells, including *Cerithium*, which must have been brought a distance of 40–50 miles. Accompanying the fossils were a piece of fluor spar and other curiosities, so that it has been suggested, with reason, as well as mirth, that here was a primitive museum[3]. British barrows have furnished specimens of the joints of encrinites ("sea-lilies"), known in folk-lore as "St Cuthbert's beads[4]." In one case the specimen had actually been bored for stringing[5]. It is probable, indeed, that from the earliest ages men have never ceased to collect these beautiful little "beads."

Land- and sea-shells, not usually so hard as the fossil species, have also been assiduously collected by early man for funeral gifts. It has been asserted that nearly every barrow on the Chalk Downs contains land-shells[6]. Limpet shells have been found under the megaliths of Cornwall and Brittany[7]. Saxon graves in Kent frequently yield, not only native land- and sea-shells, but also exotic cowries, which must have come from the East[8]. Necklaces made of the curious little shell, known from its shape as the "elephant's tusk" (*Dentalium*), are recorded from barrows, and there is also a note of the discovery of the

[1] *Man, the Primeval Savage*, p. 273.
[2] *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 470.
[3] *Essex Naturalist*, XIV. 1905, p. 24.
[4] *Origins of Eng. Hist.*, pp. 144–5.
[5] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 62.
[6] *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Antiq. Field Club*, XVII. 1896, p. 75.
[7] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 112.
[8] *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, p. 425.

"Venus's ear" (*Haliotis*)[1]. The catalogue might be extended, but it is already long enough to illustrate the topic under discussion.

Mention must be made of a parallel custom which was observed in Lapland in both ancient and modern times. Old Lappish graves opened near Varanger Fiord contained, besides our familiar quartz and flint, numbers of sea-urchins, presumably, though it is not explicitly so stated, belonging to recent species[2]. More interesting were the snail-shells, known by the Laplanders as *Hundsjael*, or "dog-souls," and mussel-shells, or "cow-souls." It seems that the natives, down to a comparatively recent period, treasured fossils and queerly-shaped stones as fetishes. Nordvi, who opened the graves, conjectured that the shells were substitutes for living dogs and cows, these animals being too precious for sacrifice[3]. This explanation is plausible as an explanation of this particular case. The natives of Ceylon, however, employed shells of a certain species for funeral purposes[4], and altogether the custom is too widely known to be explicable on narrow grounds. To round off these examples, we may note the strange cases reported from Frampton church, near Boston, in Lincolnshire. Several stone coffins, discovered in this church, were found to be filled with sand, together with the shells of cockles and other molluscans. The shells had evidently been placed in the receptacles by design, and as the bones had not perished, the speculation was put forward that the purpose of the shells was to preserve the skeleton[5]. This solution of the puzzle does not appear to be allowable, but the circumstances are certainly peculiar. The fact that the coffins were filled with material leads us to suspect that they had been tampered with at some unknown period[6]. Alternatively, we may suppose that the maritime folk of Frampton were especially given over to the belief in shells, and carried the principle to extremes. For the graves of sailors and fishermen are eminently marked out

[1] *Origins of Eng. Hist.*, pp. 144–5.

[2] *Jour. Anthrop. Inst.*, VI., 1877, p. 323.

[3] G. von Düben, *Om Lappland och Lapparne*, 1873, p. 251. Much curious lore on kindred topics will be found in Jean Scheffer's *Lapponia*, 1673 (there is a useful English edition, published by Thos. Newborough, 1704).

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 112. [5] *Ibid.* VII. p. 507.

[6] Possibly collected by masons for making mortar, during alterations (W. J.).

for shell decoration, though, it is true, these ornaments are now placed above ground. Frequently one reads of the practice being observed when a sailor dies in a strange land.

Our list of grave ornaments is by no means exhausted. Brooches and pins, armlets and bracelets, trinkets of gold or silver, perforated boars' tusks and crescents of wolves' teeth, are among the relics known to the barrow-digger. Oftentimes, the decorative and the useful objects lie side by side. We have already noticed Pliny's allusion to mirrors. A valuable commentary is afforded by the old Swedish custom of depositing a looking-glass in the coffin of an unmarried woman[1]. Instances of the discovery of golden ornaments abound in archaeological handbooks. We look around for an instance of survival, and meet with a startling example of recent date. The incident took place at the funeral of Lord Palmerston in Westminster Abbey, in 1865, and is thus described by Mr Moncure D. Conway: "The rain fell heavily, the wind howled about the old walls, and in that darkness the body was lowered—gold rings along with dust falling on the coffin[2]." This story is of the provoking kind which makes the reader put questions, but Mr Conway, alas, has now also passed beyond the reach of inquiries, and we must be content with the definite statement, inherently probable, and made in all honesty. Perhaps light may come from a study of the practice of presenting rings at funerals to the mourners,—a custom frequently alluded to by John Evelyn in his *Diary*. Were these funeral gifts ever thrown into the grave as votive offerings?

With the foregoing incident we may compare the evidence given in the *Victoria History of Cornwall*, tending to show that the practice of burying rings, coins, and other articles, was common in Cornwall during the Mediaeval period and lasted until the latter part of the sixteenth century. Still more singular is the persistence of the practice of laying combs along with the other mortuary furniture. Wooden combs are not unusually

[1] *Curious Church Customs*, p. 141. Cf. *Guide to Bronze Age*, pp. 109, 126, for Siberian and Indian examples.

[2] M. D. Conway, *Autobiography and Experiences*, 1904, II. p. 77. The incident is not mentioned in Evelyn Ashley's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, 1879, nor in the Marquis of Lorne's *Viscount Palmerston*, 1892. Cf. Cornish Customs, as described in *Vict. Hist. of Cornwall*, 1906, I. p. 367.

found in settlements of the Bronze Age[1], and examples in bone are of common occurrence on Early Iron Age sites. It is believed, however, that some of these combs were employed, not for arranging the hair, but for pressing home the weft in the manufacture of fabrics[2]. But when we approach the Saxon period, we find the ordinary comb installed as a recognized grave gift. Contemporary burials on the Continent, in North France, in Luxembourg, in Belgium, tell the same story[3]. The Saxon combs, incised with lines and circles, were laid in the graves both of men and women. Turning to our *Hydriotaphia*, and reading once more of Browne's discovery, in his beloved Norfolk, of "nippers" and "combs handsomely wrought[4]," we are tempted to pursue the matter. The sequel is curious: combs, in later history, appear to have been reserved for burials of members of the priestly order. The beginnings of the practice are seen as early as the days of St Cuthbert, on whose breast was found, when his body was disinterred in Durham Cathedral, a plain simple Saxon comb of ivory[5]. Later records are numerous, and it has been conjectured that the combs were those which had been used at the first tonsure of the novice[6]. The comb played an important part in Mediaeval ritual, as related by Dr Daniel Rock. These objects were of ivory, elaborately carved, and studded with gems. At the High Mass, the hair of the celebrant was combed by someone appointed for that purpose, this coadjutor varying according to the rank of his superior[7]. Mr Romilly Allen, in discussing the changes in the methods of sepulture brought about by the spread of Christianity, asserts that no objects were placed in the grave with the Christian dead[8]. This pronouncement, even when made by such a high authority, must not be accepted literally. Apart from the comb, ecclesiastics had other special articles

[1] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 139.

[2] *Guide to Early Iron Age*, pp. 127, 129, 140.

[3] *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 88; *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, p. 425.

[4] Sir T. Browne, *Hydriotaphia*. See "Works," ed. S. Wilkin, 1884, III. p. 13.

[5] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., II. p. 230. [6] *Ibid.* p. 269.

[7] D. Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*, 1903, II. p. 101.

[8] J. R. Allen, *Mon. History of the Early Brit. Church*, pp. 34, 65.

buried with them. Mr Allen himself notices the striking exception of burying a crozier in the coffin of a bishop[1]. The chalice and paten were also commonly deposited with priests. Specimens of these articles, with a pair of scissors, were found in the coffin of St Cuthbert. Dr Rock tells us, too, that small wooden crosses, gilded with metal, were placed in the coffin, and on the breast of the corpse was a parchment scroll, inscribed with the Absolution. Again, while on the one hand, Professor Tylor has shown that the early Christians of Rome and Greece retained the heathen custom of placing in the tomb articles of toilet and children's playthings[2]; on the other, records prove that in our own country there has always been a secret longing to place gifts in the grave. The truth seems to be that, down to our own day, there has existed among the more ignorant classes an undercurrent of belief, essentially pagan in its origin, usually driven under by the external pressure of orthodoxy and public opinion, but so strong and permanent, that it often reaches the surface, to the surprise of the more intelligent folk. But the heathen belief has been present all the time, and need not greatly astonish us, since the most advanced materialist is frequently a victim of trivial superstitions which are scouted by scientific men as absurd and baseless.

The fourth group of articles with which we have to deal, comprising objects partly useful and partly symbolical or commemorative, will not detain us long. The sole reason for considering this miscellaneous group separately is its diversified character—the objects do not so readily fall into classes. One or two modern examples will illustrate the kind of collection sometimes met with. While this chapter was being written, the daily newspaper supplied an account of the burial of a gipsy woman and her son at Tiverton. All the woman's jewellery was deposited in her coffin, and, by the side of her son, the mourners laid his watch and chain. All the other personal effects were burned. A short time previously the same journal had recorded the funeral of an old mountain hermit at Carnarvon.

[1] J. R. Allen, *op. cit.* pp. 34, 243; *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.* III. p. 394; XI. p. 12. There is a good collection of such objects in the Cathedral library at Chichester.

[2] *Prim. Culture*, I. pp. 494–5.

The dead man was buried in his ordinary clothes, and with him were placed his pipe, his tobacco pouch and walking-stick. Only a whim, exclaims the careless reader, but the fancy was not bred for the first time in the brain of that old recluse. Other folk, not unobservant, recognize that such a miscellany of votive offerings is evidence of an older condition of culture, and that the variety of objects proves only the decay of tradition, with a consequent confusion of ideas. To some degree this is true, but the ethnologist and the archaeologist can decipher the meaning otherwise, and can show that primitive peoples love to offer a wealth of objects. First, the student of ethnology notices similar customs prevailing in many countries. The practice was well known to the ancients, and the translator of Ovid has thus rendered the idea:

> "Tombs have their honours, too, our parents crave
> Some slender present to adorn the grave....
> They only ask a tile, with garlands crowned,
> And fruit and salt to scatter on the ground."

Salt, by the way, was formerly strewn on graves in the North of England. Sir William Turner tells how the grave of an aboriginal Australian savage, who was buried only a little over sixty years ago, contained a varied assortment of articles, not all of quite the same age. The list included a large piece of flint and the handle of a pocket-knife—probably fire agents—a clay pipe, an iron spoon, and the remains of a rusted pannikin[1]. In Bengal, modern graves have revealed such diverse objects as rice, tinfoil coins, pipes, paper houses, and models of boats[2]. Thus the custom under notice, though of isolated occurrence in Britain, has its correlative in other lands. But even in Britain, one hears whisperings of weird customs. A lock of wool used to be placed in the coffins of Wiltshire shepherds. The traditional explanation was that shepherds are often unavoidably absent from church, and the wool was a guarantee that the nature of the man's calling would not be overlooked at the great assize. But elsewhere we read of the desire to inter some tool or vessel typical of the occupation of the deceased person; and with this habit we might connect the practice, common in

[1] *Nature*, LVII., 1898, pp. 257–8.

[2] *Prim. Culture*, I. pp. 492–4.

Scotland and the North of England, of carving tools and implements on gravestones.

The archaeologist advances to inspect examples of early tombs rich in funeral relics. He pauses a moment to remark the abundance of objects sometimes found in Saxon graves: swords and buckets, rivets and nails, weighing scales and bunches of keys, drinking-cups, brooches, buttons, and many other articles[1]. The Romans, too, besides entombing coins and jewellery, added such objects as sandals, glass vessels, and amphorae[2] (Fig. 61). The taste for accumulating grave-gifts

FIG. 61. Roman Sepulchral chest, found at Avisford, Sussex. The chest was formed out of a single block and was covered with a flat slab. The square glass vessel in the middle contained calcined bones. Around this vessed were disposed three earthen vases with handles, several paterae, a pair of sandals, an oval dish, with handle, scalloped round the edge, containing a transparent egg-shaped agate. Three lamps are fixed on supporting projections of stone.

can be observed in the earlier Barrow period. A Bronze Age barrow at Aldbourne, Wiltshire, supplies perhaps the most noteworthy example. This grave contained an exceptional number of articles. Besides the "incense-cup," with its characteristic ornament, the excavators found, among the burnt bones, a small bronze knife and two bronze awls, each tool bearing signs of having passed through the funeral fire. Beads were also discovered, wrought from such different materials as glass-paste, amber, and lignite, and one from the stem of an encrinite. The list further included a large flat ring and a pendant ornament of lignite, a conical button made of shale, a small polished pebble of haematite, and the cast of a cardium shell, presumably in

[1] See e.g. *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, p. 425.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 327–8.

a fossil condition. The flint flakes, the arrow-heads and shards, the bones, tusks, and teeth of animals, which complete the list[1], seem unimpressive by the side of such a collection. Here then, in very early times, we see the system of funeral gifts highly developed. The abundance of objects displayed in the Aldbourne barrow may indicate the burial of someone whose importance was pre-eminent, but in other cases, where the number, rather than the value, of the gifts is noticeable, there seems to have been a desire to supply the deceased person with all things conveniently obtainable. Food, weapons, and charms, ornaments and luxuries were thus provided. Our modern representative relics of this cultural stage furnish a list, meagre by comparison, but still significant by reason of its eclectic character. The same idea, materialized in somewhat different forms, impelled the man of old and the man of yesterday. Belief in a future state, at times modified by fear and faint in its expression, at others amounting to a profound conviction, has tinctured almost all of our funeral ceremonies. Savage and sage, for some thousands of years past, seem to have acted towards the dead in accordance with the word of our English philosopher: "It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man to tell him he is at the end of his nature[2]."

We have yet to review, very briefly, three or four interesting subjects which fall within the scope of this already lengthy chapter. The Burial Service of the Anglican Church provides for earth to be cast on the coffin "by some standing by," while the priest pronounces the solemn words, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." This combination of phrases has been traced to a similar passage in the Sarum Manual, a passage founded in turn, it is supposed, on several Biblical expressions[3]. A little doubt, however, hangs over the ultimate origin of the words of the Commendation, though the precise form of the phrases may be due to Scriptural influence. The idea underlying the words, and its mode of operation, are alike ancient.

[1] *Guide to Bronze Age*, pp. 60–3.

[2] *Hydriotaphia*, ch. v. (Browne's "Works," ed. S. Wilkin, III. p. 40).

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., I. p. 388; 4th Ser., VIII. p. 169. Cf. Gen. iii. 19, xviii. 27; Job xxxiv. 15; Eccles. iii. 20, xii. 7 etc.

For my part, I think that the expression plainly points to a time when cremation and inhumation were both familiar to the community; that is to say, some equivalent words were used when the early Christians of Britain had begun to combat, not altogether with success, the system of burning the body. If the words "earth to earth" and "dust to dust" stood alone, it might fairly be argued that the compilers of the earliest Services believed literally in the creation of man from the dust. But the phrase "ashes to ashes" forbids that interpretation. It has, so far as may be known, never been taught that man originally came from ashes, though, figuratively, in moments of contrition, he has declared himself to be "but dust and ashes." The collocation of the phrases seems to betray a compromise between modes of burial. Parenthetically, we note that the Roman practice, as described by Horace, was to cast earth three times upon the body[1]. Until this was done, the spirit could not enter Elysium. It is probable that a like custom goes back to the Barrow period. Canon Greenwell supposes that, at a barrow funeral, each of the tribesmen carried his portion of earth, probably in a basket[2]. This conjecture receives support from the conduct of certain South African tribes, the members of which share the task of scooping together the material for the burial-mound, using however, for that purpose, the hands alone. The same procedure is followed by Lascars when burying a comrade in a strange land[3].

Let us examine a little further this co-operation of the mourners, as testified by actual survival. As already stated, the rubric directs that the earth shall be cast upon the body "by some standing by," while the priest repeats the collect or "Commendation." In practice, the sexton usually throws in the earth, although I feel certain that I have more than once seen the officiating clergyman perform this office. The rubric, as we know it, was formulated in the year 1552. Prior to that date, the soil was cast upon the corpse by the priest[4]. We may take

[1] Horace, *Carm.* l. I. xxviii. 35 (*licebit injecto ter pulvere curras*). Cf. Evan Daniel, *The Prayer Book*, 12th edition, n.d. p. 411.

[2] *British Barrows*, p. 5. [3] *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., VIII. p. 107.

[4] E. Daniel, *op. cit.* p. 410; J. H. Blunt, *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*,

it that this was the more common practice in Mediaeval times. The ceremony was also rendered symbolical in some districts by strewing the earth in the form of a cross[1]. Again, as in the Ritual of Brixen, the priest scattered the earth three times with a shovel[2]. In the Greek rite, too, the lot fell to the priest[3]. Among the Jews, each relative of the dead person threw earth on the coffin[4], and there are records of a like observance in Christian communities[5]. The daily newspapers occasionally report instances of the practice in our own day. Taking these isolated examples, and comparing them with the custom, once common in rural England, of five or six persons assisting the sexton to fill up the grave[6], we can outline a simple hypothesis. The early Christians probably followed their heathen contemporaries in allowing the interment to be a common labour. Afterwards, the throwing in of handfuls of earth—and perhaps of ashes also (cf. p. 290 *supra*, concerning charcoal)—was a rite in which many took part, the antiphonal service being chanted during the act. In the later Mediaeval period the priest seems largely to have usurped the office. The Reformation allotted the function once more to the mourners in general, at least nominally, and on rare occasions the right is still exercised. The original meaning is forgotten, and symbolism is evoked to explain the practice. And just as some writers are content to see, in the ashes, merely a symbol of penitence and humiliation, as illustrated in the old Ash Wednesday observances, so other authorities, with what appears to be a short view, deem the earth simply typical of man's reputed origin and mortality: *Hodie mihi, cras tibi.* It seems more in accord with facts to recognize the bit of soil thrown into the grave as a vestigial proof of the continuity of habit, weakened to some degree because the ceremony, instead of being generally shared by the mourners, is performed vicariously by the sexton.

1903 (new impression, 1899), p. 481 n. See also authorities given in *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., VIII. pp. 107, 169.

[1] *Church of Our Fathers*, II. pp. 397–8; *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., VIII. p. 169.

[2] *Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. C. G. Herbermann and others, 1908, III. p. 75.

[3] W. E. Addis and T. Arnold, *Catholic Dict.*, 1893, p. 393; J. H. Blunt, *loc. cit.*

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., VIII. p. 107. [5] *Ibid.*

[6] J. H. Blunt, *loc. cit.* Cf. *Church of Our Fathers*, II. p. 388.

The next survival to claim our attention is illustrated by the Lancashire custom, in vogue not further back than the year 1888, of sending a small sheaf of wheat to be distributed, at the time of the funeral, to the relatives of the deceased person[1]. At once the words of the Burial Service, and the Scriptural allusion to the "corn of wheat," come to mind[2]. The ancient Christians considered wheat to be a symbol of the resurrection of the body, and this idea is exemplified on a gem described by De Montfaucon. The ear of wheat, carved in wood or stone, seems to perpetuate an old pagan belief. The custom, in varied forms, is as widespread as it is time-honoured. At a modern Greek funeral two men were observed carrying each a dish of parboiled wheat to be deposited over the corpse[3]. General Pitt-Rivers quotes Professor Pearson to the effect that the burning of corn on graves was forbidden by the Church in Saxon times[4]. This ban implies that the practice had its roots in pagan soil, so that all that the Christians did was to change the underlying principle. General Pitt-Rivers himself found ears of corn mixed with the sand near a Romano-British grave which contained a skeleton, and he also recorded the finding of charred wheat in contiguity with skeletons belonging probably to the Roman period[5]. Closely connected with these observances is the practice of placing corn and other articles of food on the grave. Instances are multitudinous. In the recesses of the Pamirs, corn, berries, and flowers are the offerings[6]; the Spaniards deposit bread and wine on the anniversary of death; the Bulgarians hold a special Feast of the Dead on Palm Sunday, and eat the remains of the funeral offerings[7]. The subject is, indeed, wide and complicated. At the back of the attenuated ceremony of to-day lies the primitive belief in the life of the dead, with the consequent feasts and sacrifices. The inquiry, upon which we cannot now enter, soon leads us into an investigation of the corn-gods and "gods of cultivation," which are associated with the religions of primitive

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VI. pp. 267, 356.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 36–8; St John xii. 24.
[3] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VI. p. 356.
[4] *Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II., 1887, p. 196.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] O. Olufsen, *Through the Unknown Pamirs*, 1904, p. 151.
[7] E. Metchnikoff, *Nature of Man*, tr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, 1906, pp. 140–1.

folk. For a discussion of these matters, the reader is referred to the exhaustive works of Professor Frazer and Mr Grant Allen.

With respect to the burial feasts of the prehistoric period, the line of descent might be easily traced. The funeral suppers given by the Greeks and Romans to the relatives of a dead person are frequently referred to by classical authors. Similar feasts are mentioned by our English writers from the time of Robert de Brunne (fl. A.D. 1288–1338) onwards[1]. Huge repasts—shall we not say orgies?—continued in fashion until the eighteenth century at least. Brand relates that, at the funeral of a Highland lord in 1725, not fewer than 100 black cattle and 300 sheep were slain "for the entertainment of the company[2]." Nowadays the feast has dwindled, in most localities, to a glass of wine and a biscuit. But there have been some amazing exceptions. Canon Atkinson, in the earlier years of his incumbency at Danby-in-Cleveland, about the middle of the nineteenth century, found that the "funeral bak'd meats" were held in high esteem. On the death of a villager of importance, invitations were sent out "not merely by the score, but by the hundred. I have myself counted," he says, "more than three hundred seated in the church on at least four, if not five, different occasions. And the rule is, and, still more, was, that the preponderating majority of these 'went to the burial' at the house where the corpse lay, beginning at ten o'clock and continuing to drop in, according to convenience or distance to be traversed, throughout the morning and afternoon till it became time to 'lift the body' and make a start for the church. And all these were fed—entertained, rather—at the house of mourning, if it chanced to be that of one of the principal inhabitants." All day long there were relays of visitors, from a dozen up to a score, smoking and drinking at the house[3]. During the latter part of the entertainment glasses of wine were handed round, with crisp cakes, colloquially known as

[1] Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, II. pp. 237–45.

[2] *Ibid.*, II. p. 240. Pagan feasts at interments were forbidden to Christians in Saxon times (*Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 120 n.).

[3] *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, pp. 226–7.

"averils" or "averil bread[1]." Canon Atkinson traced this word thus: *averil, avril,* then by transposition, *arvil* or *arvel* (= heir-ale). This "heir-ale," or succession-ale, thus stands for the feast at which the heirs drank themselves into their father's land. It is interesting to note that this etymology is supported by the highest authorities—for example, by the *New Oxford Dictionary.*

Whilst insisting on the continuity of custom and folk-memory, as proved by survivals, it would be very unwise to ignore the changes which have been gradually taking place since the Barrow period. Looking, for the moment, at extreme cases, the actual result appears to reveal a wide gap, and for the sake of contrast, I will quote Mr Grant Allen's fanciful description of the burial of a chieftain in a long barrow on Ogbury Downs, Wiltshire. The passage is long and somewhat ornate, but, because it is probably correct in most of the details, and helps us to "visualize the past," it shall be given in full. "I saw them bear aloft, with beating of breasts and loud gesticulations, the bent corpse of their dead chieftain: I saw the terrified and fainting wives haled along by thongs of raw oxhide, and the weeping prisoners driven passively like sheep to the slaughter: I saw the fearful orgy of massacre and rapine around the open tumulus, the wild priest shattering with his gleaming tomahawk the skulls of his victims, the fire of gorse and low brushwood prepared to roast them, the heads and feet flung carelessly on the top of the yet uncovered stone chamber, the awful dance of blood-stained cannibals around the mangled remains of men and oxen, and, finally, the long task of heaping up above the stone hut of the dead king the earthen mound that was never again to be opened to the light of day till, ten thousand years later, we modern Britons invaded with our prying, sacrilegious mattock the sacred privacy of the cannibal ghost[2]."

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 226–7. Cf. J. W. Clark and T. McKenny Hughes, *Life and Letters of Adam Sedgwick,* 1890, I. p. 27.

[2] Grant Allen, *Falling in Love: Essays,* new edition, 1891, p. 296–7. Cf. Imaginative description given by R. S. Lineham, *The Street of Human Habitations,* 1894, pp. 43–8.

A curious side-question is raised by this mention of funeral feasts—the difficulty sometimes felt in accounting for the abundance of teeth, human and non-human, in ancient graves. Granted, that the heads of animals might be thrown into the grave as uneatable, or, perchance, as having accredited virtues, and granted, again, that teeth are among the most durable portions of a skeleton, the facts are occasionally puzzling. Baron de Baye suggests that the heads of sacrificial animals—he is referring to the Saxon period—were fixed on large stakes as offerings to the gods, and that, as the heads decayed, the teeth became detached, and were scattered over the ground, to be accidentally mixed with the soil when a fresh burial took place[1]. The explanation may be partially true, but one thinks that a simpler solution is at hand, in the successive interments and sacrifices which would be associated with one grave. This would lead to inevitable mingling of bones and teeth, and if, as is probable, the skeletons of the dead were often kept some time before they were buried, the confusion would be increased. This would account for the numbers of human teeth found in the Late-Celtic cemetery at Harlyn Bay, not corresponding to the skeletons with which they were associated. In one cist there were twenty-three teeth which did not belong to that particular interment[2]. Though putting forward the prosaic explanation of unintentional mixture, I think that there is another phase of the question—the superstitious. Among primitive folk there is commonly a belief in the efficacy of human bones as talismans. The atlas and axis bones of the neck have been preserved for this purpose, and the skull especially has been treasured and worshipped[3]. It is very probable that pieces of human skulls which had, either in life or after death, undergone the operation of trepanning, were kept as mascots. And, remembering the part played by teeth in folk-lore and superstition, one is compelled to retain an open mind on the subject of teeth found in ancient graves. Messrs Spencer and Gillen have described, in a vivid manner, the ceremony of knocking

[1] *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 120–1. Cf. *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, p. 408.

[2] *Harlyn Bay*, p. 35.

[3] *Evol. of the Idea of God*, pp. 26, 31, 32, 33.

out the teeth, as performed by some of the tribes of Central Australia. The operation is accompanied by the drinking of blood as an act of fealty, the displaced teeth being pounded, laid on a scrap of meat, and eaten by a specified relative[1]. Again, in Cornwall, the very county, as it happens, in which Harlyn Bay is situated, teeth were formerly stolen from the coffins under the floors of churches and sold as charms against disease[2]. According to the Devonshire superstition, a tooth bitten out of a churchyard skull will ward off toothache, and the Shropshire peasant has a similar legend[3]. All over England we hear of the fancy for preserving or ceremonially burning teeth which have been extracted. Somersetshire women would hide the teeth in their hair[4], but more usually, the teeth, like the parings of the nails and locks of hair, are burnt, lest they should fall into the hands of an enemy who, by "sympathetic magic," might injure the whole body of the owner[5]. The most suggestive evidence, however, comes from Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cornwall. In those counties all the teeth shed during a person's lifetime were saved and placed in his coffin, being "required at the Resurrection." Authentic instances are on record[6].

We have now surveyed, however inadequately, our modes of burial, the forms of the graves, the gifts deposited with the dead, and funeral feasts, and incidentally we have noticed a number of superstitions. We may fittingly terminate the discussion by glancing at the closing ceremony of a modern funeral—the placing of flowers on the grave. The practice has its

[1] B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, 1904, pp. 588, et seqq., p. 593, and ch. xxi. generally.

[2] *Harlyn Bay*, p. 35. Cf. *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*, ed. W. Andrews, 1897, p. 249.

[3] *Lore and Legend of the English Church*, p. 63. The sanctity attached to objects connected with the church and churchyard is discussed in Gomme's *Folk-Lore as an Histor. Science*, pp. 197–9.

[4] *Evil Eye*, p. 437.

[5] *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 145. Cf. *The Golden Bough*, I. pp. 193–207. The Incas preserve such relics and place them in the tomb. (*Folk-Lore*, VI. p. 301.)

[6] *Folk-Lore*, V. p. 343; VI. p. 301.

aesthetic as well as its religious side, and represents the refinement of ideas which are really very ancient. Even in the time of Durandus, the funeral evergreens were deemed to be symbolical only[1]. The rite of strewing graves with flowers was symbolical, too, among the Romans. Yet this kindly ceremony belongs, in the first place, to the pre-Christian age[2], and we are bound to believe that the original objects scattered over the dead were neither evergreens nor flowers. Perhaps these prototypes were the flints and shards of which we have spoken. These "forgotten things, long cast behind," have reappeared, in a more attractive guise, and, consecrated by time, have secured a firm hold in the sentiments of European nations.

[1] *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, l. VII. c. 37.

[2] *Prim. Culture*, I. p. 495; *Nature of Man*, pp. 140–1.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER VIII

THE FOLK-LORE OF THE CARDINAL POINTS

To weave romance and mystery around the four points of the compass might appear an impossible task, yet this feat was successfully performed by our rude forefathers, to whose primitive minds the plain, undeviating phenomena of Nature conveyed comfort or warning. A few simple superstitions, bequeathed from father to son, and ever amplified throughout a thousand generations, became at last a somewhat complex body of doctrine. This accumulated lore is now being rapidly scattered to the winds by the growth of science and the spread of education, but stray fragments may still be gathered by the student.

The magnetic compass, of which the history is a little uncertain (see p. 228, *supra*), may be put aside in our present inquiry, since it belongs to a state of society of comparatively high development. The unembellished teaching which is to be examined dates far earlier than the birth of science in the Middle Ages, or the period of the introduction of the magnetic needle into Europe. We shall find, however, that the folk-lore of the Cardinal Points received many additions at the hands of Mediaeval symbolists. The mythology of that epoch has, indeed, been fitly compared to a complex alloy, formed by the blending of pure ores from various sources. The traditions of previous ages were retained, and blended, but new material was thrown into the crucible.

Certain patent facts would appeal even to the elementary minds of the Stone Age men. These folk saw the sun rise daily in the East, traverse the sky by way of the South, and finally set at evening in the West. Birth and brightness were

followed by ascendancy and power; the descent led to disappearance and darkness. There was the dawn, followed by warm beams which dispersed both gloom and vapour. The blue South yielded the heat of noonday, at which time the sunbeams were genial, even in the depth of winter. But when the dying sun had withdrawn for the day, primitive men would experience discomfort and uneasy forebodings. This disappearance of the great luminary, the lord and giver of life, was a permanent mystery; the rebirth next morning was even more perplexing. At a later period, the men of China and North America, of Greece and Rome, evolved curious explanations of these phenomena, but at first only the physical effects of the sun's apparent movements would concern the barbaric mind.

Very early in the growth of ideas man would learn that the position of the sun was a good index of direction. It has been mooted whether the most ancient method of denoting direction, that is, "orientation" in its wider sense, was not to describe the speaker's surroundings, or to indicate natural features known to him and his fellows[1]. Thus, a hunter might speak of a place by reference to some prominent rock or tree; his direction might, in the same way, be told in terms of the prevailing winds. One is nevertheless driven to believe that simple observations of the sun's position would be made almost as soon as man began to take notice of any natural features or occurrences whatever; in either case, any slight priority of method is of such trivial account as to be negligible.

Seeing that the East and West points are much more clearly marked than the North and South, one would naturally expect that the ancients found those points more convenient as standards. To make accurate use of the North-to-South direction, one would either need to have an approximate method of determining time by the length of shadows, or to know how to find the Pole Star or the Great Bear by night. The modern schoolboy is occasionally taught to reckon his position by facing the East, and long ago Canon Isaac Taylor suggested that some of the early Aryan peoples similarly took

[1] See e.g. *Folk-Lore*, XII. 1901, p. 211.

the East as their standard[1]. According to this authority, the place-name Deccan is connected with the Latin *dexter*, the right hand, that is, the right hand as the observer faces the East. On this view, Deccan would be the right-hand, or South country. As an analogy, Taylor cites the Arabic word *yemin*, which means both right-hand and South (whence el-Yemen for Southern Arabia)[2]. These ideas have received considerable modern support. The Welsh name for South, *dehau*, like the Old Irish *dess* (Mod. Irish, *deas*) means also right-hand[3]. Hence we get *Deheu-dir*, the South land, for South Wales, and the Brit-Latin adjectives, *dextralis*, Southern; *sinistralis*, Northern. So, too, the Continental names, Texel and Teisterbant, are supposed to mean places lying towards the South[4]. Similarly, with the Eskimos, the words used for North and South correspond with those used for the sides of the body[5]. Other languages might be cited to show like peculiarities, but it will be sufficient here to note a few curious instances of folk-memory illustrative of the root idea.

The Jewish rabbis taught that man was born with his face towards the East; hence the right and left hand directions were respectively indicative of good and evil[6]. We infer this from the New Testament parable, wherein the sheep are set on the right hand and the goats on the left. Our words *dexterous* and *sinister* have a groundwork of the old belief to support them; the latter word, at least, is not exclusively concerned with physical awkwardness or ineptitude. The superstition concerning the left-hand colours the current meaning. A difficulty, however, arises when we discover that the Roman augurs deemed the left side indicative of good-luck. How can the two ideas be reconciled? Schrader conjectures that the East, and not the North side, was intended

[1] Isaac Taylor, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser. IV. p. 335.

[2] Taylor, *loc. cit.* Cf. O. Schrader, *Prehist. Antiquities*, trans. F. B. Jevons, 1890, p. 254. Certain passages in the Bible, e.g. Gen. xiii. 9, may be studied in this connection.

[3] Sir J. Rhŷs, *Celtic Philology*, 2nd edition, 1879, p. 10; *Folk-Lore*, XII. p. 211; I. Taylor, *loc. cit.*

[4] Rhŷs, *loc. cit.*

[5] *Folk-Lore*, XII. p. 210.

[6] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser. V. p. 332.

as the equivalent of the left hand, the supposition being that the soothsayer faced the South in his divination. Seyffert states this as a fact, adding that, in ancient Greece, augurs looked towards the North[1]. The Greek usage seems to be reflected in Homer's frequent employment of δεξιός, in the sense of favourable, or boding good, with respect to the flight of birds and other omens. It would appear that the Latin poets (e.g. Virgil and Livy) copied the Greek idea and mode of expression, using the cognate word *dexter* to denote skilful or fortunate. This theory implies that the restricted meaning of *dexter* is borrowed, and is not directly derived from Roman augury. Moreover, since the Roman diviner faced the South, *dexter* could not be applied to that point of the compass. To this extent, then, the attempt to connect the word with Deccan and similar place-names breaks down. The main conclusion, nevertheless, is little affected, namely, that words of this character were often employed to distinguish the Cardinal Points. The pitfall to be avoided is the assumption that superstitions and beliefs everywhere take precisely the same form of expression. Professor Skeat traces a connection, for example, between the Malay word *kidal* (= South), and *kidul* (= left-handed)[2]. This relationship would suggest that the standard point for observation was the West, not the East. In Greece and Rome, as we have seen, the North and South respectively were so chosen.

In some districts, where the distinctive names of the four Cardinal Points have been fully accepted, the reverse principle is seen at work: the peasant, instead of using the terms "right hand" and "left hand" to signify East and West, applies the compass points to indicate position with respect to the body. Thus, in some parts of Scotland, one still hears such expressions as "the East trouser pocket[3]." And Miss C. F. Gordon-Cumming tells of an old Highland woman who inquired at

[1] Schrader, *op. cit.* p. 256. O. Seyffert, *Dict. Class. Antiquities*, ed. H. Nettleship and J. E. Sandys, 1899, p. 86. Cf. Liddell and Scott, *Greek Lexicon*, under δεξιός.

[2] *Folk-Lore*, XII. p. 211.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 210–11.

the post-office whether the envelope should be stamped in the East or the West corner[1].

A little detail respecting the folk-lore of the Cardinal Points may not be unacceptable. Taking first the East, we find that this quarter, besides serving as the point of determination for certain races whose speech was of the Aryan stock, was the reputed home of deities. We have seen that folk of many climes turned to the East in prayer. That portion of the firmament was symbolical of hope, and purity, and fulness of life. Milton speaks of

> ....."the Eastern gate,
> Where the great sun begins his state"—

as if the grandeur of dawn could not be overlooked by the most unresponsive eye. St Augustine considers the East emblematic of the "Light of Heaven." How important this point of the compass was esteemed by Christian and pagan architects is proved by the practice of orientation—the word itself marks out the idea. Hawker, of Morwenstow, ever mystical in his beliefs, declared that the East was the realm of oracles and represented the special throne of God, while the West was the domain of the people—the Galilee of all nations[2].

The South, the region of warmth and midday, has always been beloved by the religious, as well as the superstitious, of most countries, especially in the Northern parts of the world. The prose Eddas speak of the Southern edge of heaven as the everlasting abode of righteous men. Again, one of the roots of the magic tree Yggdrasill springs from the warm South side, over the Urdur fountain. The preference for the South is well seen in ecclesiastical matters. The churchyard cross usually stands on the South side of the church (Fig. 62). As will be shown in Chapter IX., on this side the churchyard yew is most generally found. The Southern doorway is somewhat more common than the Northern; where both exist, the Southern is more in favour with the worshippers. On a balance of observations, I find that the Southern side of a church is more

[1] C. F. Gordon-Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, 1883, p. 247.

[2] R. S. Hawker, in *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser. v. pp. 253–4. Cf. W. R. Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*, 1892, ch. viii. pp. 174–200.

elaborately decorated than the Northern (cf. p. 239, *supra*, and the reservation there made), a fact illustrated in the mouldings and capitals (Fig. 63), the window tracery and the painted glass. The bishop's throne is customarily placed on the South

FIG. 62. Churchyard cross, on the South side of Bakewell church, Derbyshire. The cross, which belongs to the latter half of the eighth century, is complete, except the top arm. It exhibits foliage and fine interlaced work, with sculptured figures illustrating the Life and Death of Christ. (See *Vict. Hist. of Derby*, I. pp. 280, 287.) The cross is supposed to indicate a pre-Conquest burial ground.

side of the cathedral. The so-called "low side windows" (Fig. 64) occur most frequently in the South walls. Those curious oblique passages, known as squints or hagioscopes, cut through church walls (cf. p. 148, *supra*), are most commonly Southern features, in which case they often point directly to the Southern entrance of the building. In this country, we are accustomed to look for the cloisters of a Benedictine abbey

on the South side of the church, but in Italy the covered way usually lies to the North[1]. Here, all symbolism seems to be stripped away, and primal considerations of comfort gain the ascendancy. Our variable climate renders a sunny outlook desirable, and we notice efforts to secure this end in the familiar arrangement of old farmsteads, where the barns and enclosures frequently stand to the South of the dwelling. In a hot country, like Italy, coolness and shade would be sought, hence we find the dissimilar ground plan of the Italian abbeys.

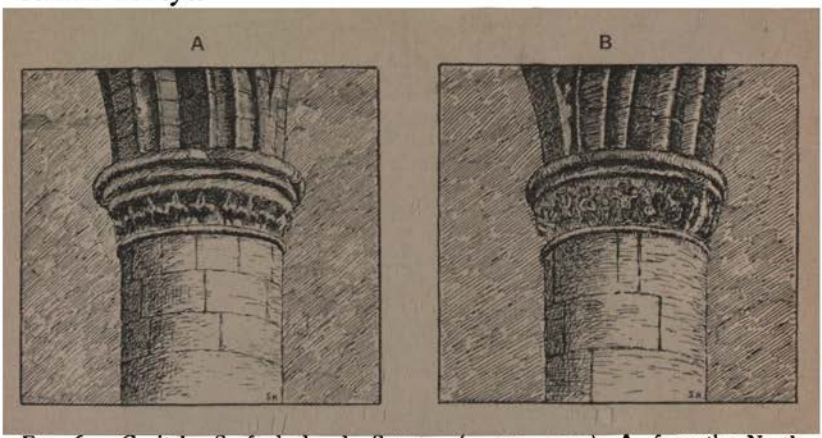

FIG. 63. Capitals, Seaford church, Sussex. (c. A.D. 1190.) **A**, from the North arcade, bears the ordinary stiff-leaved foliage of the period. **B**, from the South arcade, has elaborate carvings representing the Crucifixion, the Stoning of Stephen, and the Baptism of Christ.

But if the arrangement of the cloisters be adjudged a mere matter of economy and convenience, there exist well-rooted superstitions which cannot be so explained. "The front of everything to the South," is an old Irish maxim, and though, as Mr W. G. Wood-Martin suggests, the saying may have reference to the ceremony of making the deiseal, or right-hand circle, yet the words are pregnant of folk-custom. Formerly the Irish ploughman turned the head of his horses towards the South before yoking or unyoking. Taking an English example, we find that in Suffolk, wherever the churches possessed both a

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser. IV. pp. 261–2.

North and a South entrance, it was the practice to carry the coffin into the building by the South door, allow it to rest at the West end of the aisle, and then take it out by the North door[1]. In Lincolnshire, the North door was entirely reserved for funerals, the South and West doors being used for weddings and christenings[2]. At baptisms, again, there was a prevalent

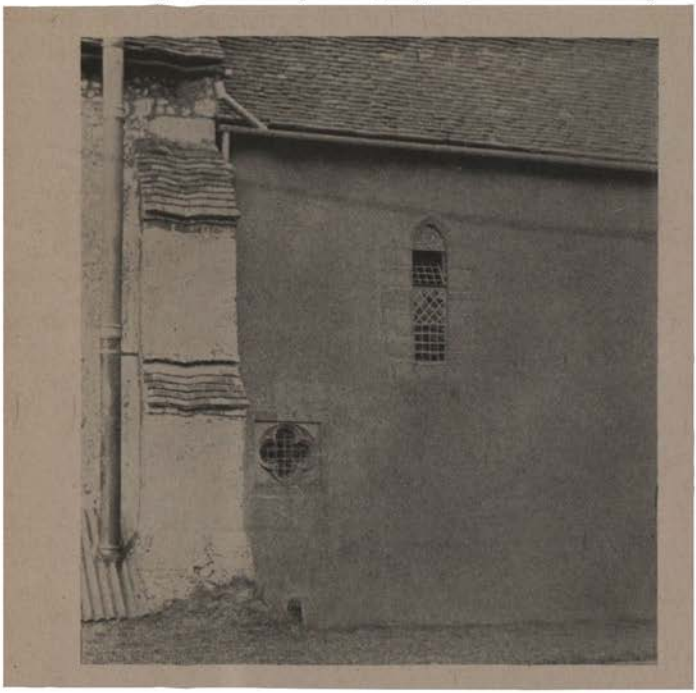

FIG. 64. Quatrefoil low side window, on the South side of the chancel wall, Tatsfield church, Surrey. c. A.D. 1300. A feature most frequently found on the South side of churches.

belief that the Holy Spirit entered the church by the South door, while the devil departed through the opening opposite—the Devil's Door (Fig. 65). Lastly, to abbreviate our list of superstitions, Pennant may be cited, to the effect that in North Wales the mourners used to bring the corpse into the churchyard by means of the South gate only[3]. With this we may

[1] W. Andrews, ed. *Curious Church Customs*, p. 137. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 96.

compare the Welsh superstition that a healing spring should have an outlet towards the South, and should be visited at midsummer. Girls who wished to know their lovers' intentions were accustomed to spread a pocket-handkerchief over the water of the well. If the waters pushed the handkerchief towards the South, so Sir John Rhŷs informs us, the lovers were honest and honourable; if the article shifted Northwards,

FIG. 65. Devil's Door (Saxon), Worth church, Sussex. According to legend, the exorcized spirit passed through this door at the time of the baptismal renunciation.

the omen was bad. These marked preferences for the South prove that the motive involved was sentimental as well as physical.

We have referred to the superstitions connected with the East and the South, and we now follow the sun to the region where he descends into the dark underworld. Professor Tylor neatly expresses the symbolism of these three positions: "Man's life in dawning beauty, in midday glory, in evening death[1]."

[1] *Prim. Culture*, II. p. 48.

The West, then, represents the kingdom of the dead, and, by transfer of ideas, the territory of alien peoples. A natural metaphor makes it the abode of shadow, of sleep, of ignorance of the Divine. In sharp contrast to these ideas is the teaching of certain races that the West is the Garden-land, the Earthly Paradise, "the new heaven and the new earth[1]." Such notions, so directly contradictory to the first-mentioned, seem to indicate worship paid to the setting sun (cf. p. 217, *supra*).

The older advocates of the Asiatic origin of the Aryan peoples were led captive by the proverb, "*Ex oriente lux.*" This phrase doubtless influenced philologists like Pott and Müller, while to Grimm must be credited the complementary epigram, "the irresistible impulse towards the West[2]." Along with the fallacy hidden in these aphorisms there is some amount of truth. Berkeley's assertion, "Westward the course of Empire takes its way," is historically justified, and is still apposite to a large degree. The more modern idea, expressed by Kipling, "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet[3]," though correct as a key to manners and customs, may be much canvassed if applied to actual migrations of men. To carry our parallels further would lead us to the purely fanciful, and would evoke the derision of the scornful. Yet the mention of one more whimsical belief may be pardoned on the ground of its age. Peter Heylyn gave utterance to the idea two and a half centuries ago, though it is likely that he was a borrower from earlier geographers. He tells us that the poets turn their faces to the West, the Fortunate Islands, "so memorized and chanted by them." To the poets, then, the North is the right hand, the South is left. But to the "Augures of old, and in our days, to Priests and Men in holy Orders, [who] usually in sacrifice and divine oblations convert themselves unto the East," the South is the right hand. Astronomers face the South, because in that way the motions of the planets may best be observed. Finally, geographers, who have "so much to do with the Elevations of the Pole,"

[1] *Ibid.* II. p. 61.

[2] J. Deniker, *Races of Man*, 1900, p. 317.

[3] R. Kipling, *The Ballad of East and West.*

turn their faces to the North, and, to them, the left hand is West[1].

If the West, according to one superstition, is the realm of death, what shall be said of the North? From that quarter no sunny rays are sent forth. The North blast brings ice and snow. A time-honoured tradition makes all fogs and storms rise from the Northern heavens[2]. Even to-day the Wiltshire peasant avers that thunder always comes from the North, though the sound may reach the ear from another direction[3]. The Northern slopes of an undulating meadow are overrun with moss and tussocks of coarse grass. But lichens, lovers of sunlight, avoid the North side of trees. An East-to-West wall built further North of East than 41° 26′ can, in latitude 51° N., receive no rays of the sun except on the South side. In the same manner a chancel which is deflected very much towards the North gets no sunshine on that side, except in the early morning, and then only in the summer season. Let hardy souls, like Kingsley, extol the North wind, if they desire, but the mass of men will still hold the icy blast in detestation. Hence the superstitions regarding the North are closely knit with physical dislike and discomfort, and rest on a basis of sound reason.

Bearing these facts in mind, we are not astonished to learn that early beliefs allocated the North to the Spirit of Evil. The idea is rife throughout the heathen legends of Northern nations[4]. The underworld, in Teutonic mythology, is placed under the third root of the ash tree, Yggdrasill, "low down toward the North," where there is cold, eternal night. In this mist-hell, the unhappy sojourner wanders down valleys deep and dark; he enters joyless caverns; oftentimes, too, he hears the roaring of the waterfall which belongs to the demons[5]. Nor are such ideas confined to heathen folk. Again and again, in the Old Testament, especially in Job and Isaiah, "the sides

[1] Peter Heylyn, *Cosmographie*, 1652, p. 22.

[2] M. D. Conway, *Demonology and Devil-Lore*, 1879, I. pp. 83 et seqq.; II. p. 115.

[3] R. Jefferies, *Wild Life in a Southern Country*, 1889, p. 33.

[4] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.* II. pp. 493, 802; III. p. 1001; IV. p. 1605.

[5] *Teut. Myth.* II. p. 802. F. Kauffmann, *Northern Mythology*, tr. M. Steele Smith, pp. 95–6.

of the North" are represented as the abode of the Prince of Darkness[1]. Even the New Testament has faint allusions to the same belief. Naturally, then, English literature became permeated with this idea. Shakespeare, all-embracing in his references to prevailing superstitions, makes La Pucelle invoke demons—"substitutes under the lordly monarch of the North[2]." In *Paradise Lost* we are told how the banded powers of Satan appear in "the spacious North," where the arch-rebel has erected his throne[3]. Milton recurs to the idea several times; thus, in one of the sonnets, we meet with the epithet, "the false North[4]." Later poets, perhaps unconsciously imitating Milton, have expressed the same fancy. Kirke White, in the *Christiad*, the poem on which, as Southey tells us, the hapless young poet bestowed most pains, placed his hosts of demons among the impenetrable fogs and lamenting gales—

> "Where the North Pole, in moody solitude,
> Spreads her huge tracks and frozen wastes around[5]."

These illustrations show that the Northern quarter of the heavens was the source of much superstition. The simple childish myth was often amplified. Origen taught that the place of everlasting damnation was at the earth's centre, and that the entrance was situated at the North Pole. Each time the Aurora Borealis flashed, the gates of hell opened anew, and the wicked on earth were warned of their doom[6]. The doctrine of fear of the North creeps in everywhere. The parish church, according to some writers, is most suitably built on the North side of the graveyard, so that it may not cast a shadow on the graves[7]. This "rule" is undoubtedly beset by many transgressions, but it embodies a tendency, and I have noticed some remarkable confirmations. Many churchyards have but a very narrow strip of ground lying to the North of the edifice. In spite of these instances, I consider that the generalization is too definite, and that the alleged reason lacks

[1] Job xxvi. 6, 7; Isa. xiv. 12, 13; Jer. iv. 6; Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12, etc.
[2] *King Henry VI*, Pt I. Act v. Sc. 3.
[3] *Par. Lost*, v. l. 726. (Cf. ll. 689, 755–6.)
[4] Milton, *Sonnet* xv. l. 7.
[5] H. Kirke White, *Christiad*, v. viii. (cf. v. xi.).
[6] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser. VI. p. 235.
[7] E. S. Armitage, *Introd. to Eng. Antiquities*, 1903, p. 116.

adequate support. The superstition concerning the Northern, or Devil's door, on the contrary, is general and well-authenticated.

The building itself affords evidence of the current superstition. Part of this testimony was put forward, inferentially, when the South was being considered; one or two additional

FIG. 66. Gateway, at Eastern entrance to St Stephen's church, Coleman Street, London. The carving (5 feet × 2½ feet) on the upper portion was originally over the North gateway. The subject is the Day of Judgement, and the figures are in high relief. The Judge is seen enthroned above, Satan is falling from heaven, and the dead are rising from their coffins. Representations of this kind are often called "Dooms."

facts may now be noticed. On the Northern gate of the church, there were sometimes represented the terrible scenes connected with the Last Judgement. An elaborate example of this treatment formerly existed over the Northern gateway of St Giles-in-the-Fields, London, and another at St Stephen's, Coleman Street (Fig. 66), though in each case the craftsman's work now occupies a different position[1]. Gloomy subjects, like the one

[1] *Antiquary*, XIX. p. 234.

mentioned, were also reserved for the North face of the church by those Mediaeval sculptors whose sermons in stone warned many long-past generations. Rheims Cathedral has the terrors of the Last Day thus depicted on its North side. The arrangements of the church services also show traces of the influence now under discussion. In the North of Europe, where the usual rule for orienting churches is observed, the Gospel is read from the North side of the altar, so that, according to Mediaeval symbolism, light may be given "to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death[1]." Or, as Durandus has it, the North side is allotted to sinners, and the Gospel calls sinners to repentance[2]. Conversely, the Epistle is read from the South side, the abode of the faithful and the converted. If one person has to read both the Epistle and the Gospel, he crosses from the South to the North before reading the latter service. To account for this change of position, other reasons have been advanced. Some writers think that the spread of the Word from the South to the North is intended; others declare that the crossing over was a matter of mere convenience. Moreover, while a similar custom prevailed in the early churches of Rome, the position of the reader in those days was to the right or left of the celebrant; consequently, where the building was not alined East and West, the mystical interpretation could not apply. Whatever be the origin or the date of the introduction of the custom, it seems fairly conclusive that some such symbolical meaning was understood during the Mediaeval period[3]. Nevertheless, we should be on our guard against the meticulous and over-strained interpretations which the symbolists are wont to produce for the most trivial ceremonies and occurrences. Most readers will recall the passage in Ecclesiastes concerning the fall of the tree to the South, or to the North. On these expressions, Coverdale, in his treatise entitled "Praying for the Dead," bases a far-fetched fragment of symbolism. It runs as follows: "As men die, so shall they arise; if in faith in the Lord, towards the South, they

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., IX. p. 53.

[2] Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, L. 4, C. 23.

[3] Discussion in *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., VI. pp. 428, 512–3. Numerous authorities cited.

need no prayers; they are happy, and shall arise in glory presently; if in unbelief, without the Lord, towards the North then are they past all help, in the damned state presently, and shall rise in eternal shame[1]."

To descend to the prosaic affairs of life, we notice some curious facts which seem to confirm the evil reputation of the North. It may be deemed a trifle, but why did our ancestors, under the old open-field system of cultivation, divide their territories into East, West, and South Fields[2], not North? To reply that, since the land was cultivated chiefly under a three-field system, with its three-course rotation of crops, one quarter of the compass must necessarily be omitted, is scarcely satisfactory. Why should it be the North particularly which is avoided in the allotment of areas and in the nomenclature? Besides, where the two-field system was in vogue, we commonly find East and West, rather than North and South. One does not wish to press such nice points, but was it by chance that in the old Lombardic boundary treaties the Northern tract was styled "*nulla ora*[3]"? Undoubtedly, it is a fair response to say that these matters were instinctively settled on principles of convenience and physical comfort. The motive for the choice was at first probably thus simple, but supplementary ideas sprang up, and tended to harden the preference into a rule. One or two further illustrations will now be given.

A study of the ancient Pilgrims' Way of the South of England shows that the Mediaeval wayfarers, and, doubtless, the far earlier prehistoric folk, preferred to travel along the Southern slope of the hills, and consistently avoided the Northern. The Southern, or drier, side of a stream was also selected, wherever the pathway chanced to follow a watercourse for a short distance. Mr Hilaire Belloc states that he has counted but four exceptions to this rule in the whole course of the Mediaeval Pilgrims' Way. And, again, where the Mediaeval track leads to a church, Mr Belloc asserts that it passes on the South side, leaving the

[1] Eccles. xi. 3; Miles Coverdale, *Remains*, ed. G. Pearson (Parker Society), 1846, p. 258.

[2] F. Seebohm, *English Village Community*, 1896, p. 23.

[3] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 34.

building on the North[1]. One exception seems to have been overlooked by Mr Belloc—the church of Paddlesworth, near Snodland, in Kent, which has the Pilgrims' Way passing by its North door. Another apparent exception, at Puttenham, Surrey, is accounted for by a modern diversion of the old road.

Isaac Taylor, writing to prove the predilection of our forefathers for the South, once asserted that there are more villages named Sutton than Norton, Weston, or Aston[2]. He gave no statistics in support of his contention, but the clue seemed worth following. I have therefore examined the place-names contained in the most recent Post Office Guide, and have supplemented these from other lists. All village-names consisting of a single compounded word, one member of which is clearly derived from the Cardinal Points, were counted and classified. Doubtful examples were set aside; many others, though disguised under curious orthographies, were properly included. The result showed

32 Nortons, + 58 other place-names obviously traceable to "North"	90
52 Suttons, + 49 other place-names obviously traceable to "South"	101
35 Astons and Eastons, + 38 other place-names obviously traceable to "East"	73
41 Westons, + 63 other place-names obviously traceable to "West"	104

As might have been anticipated, the disparities are not so great as Taylor's statement implied, because, on the whole, the village-names run in pairs; a North keeps company with a South. With respect to North and South, there is indeed a slight preponderance in favour of the sunny quarter. The Wests, likewise, outnumber the Easts, from which we may infer that a sheltered situation was operative in determining the choice of a site. The coombe which opened towards the West or South, and the hill-slope similarly situated, would attract the first settlers.

[1] H. Belloc, *The Old Road*, 1904, pp. 60–1; cf. F. C. Elliston-Erwood, *The Pilgrims' Road*, 1910, p. 84.

[2] I. Taylor, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., IV. p. 335.

The place-names which consist of two separate words, one of which was a prefix indicating position, revealed somewhat similar preferences. Of this class, comprising such names as North Cheam and West Ham, there were 241 Wests to 181 Easts, thus confirming the first list. Then came a surprise; 164 Norths against 133 Souths. There are, it is true, names like North Cotes, with no corresponding South Cotes[1], but this also holds good conversely. On the other hand, it is probable, either that these double names which have not coalesced represent comparatively recent parochial divisions (e.g. East and West Horsley, Surrey), or that one name is a modern imitation or duplicate of the other (e.g. East and West Wickham, Kent, several miles apart, the first being a later geographical distinction). If any support is lent to Taylor's dictum therefore, it could only come from a consideration of names originally given to genuinely ancient settlements, and to obtain these names a very accurate and intimate study of thousands of local documents would be necessary.

Though not strictly concerned with the Cardinal Points, an old custom which bears on the question of sites may be noticed here. This is the pastoral habit, adopted by primitive shepherd folk, of living, during summer, in booths or tents set up on elevated pastures, and of descending, in winter, from these grazing grounds to the plains, where there were substantial houses, each having its ox-stalls and other outbuildings. The "summer-houses" may be preserved for us in many place-names, as in Somerscales and Summer Lodge, Yorkshire; Somersby, North and South Somercoates, Lincolnshire; besides Somergranges, Somersall, Summerley, and many others in other counties. With these places, one may compare the Norwegian settlements, known as *saeters*, which exist to-day. There are also, in England, *sets* or *seats* (= summer abodes), such as Moorseats, Outseats, Runsett, and Thornsett[2]. The names indicative of winter sites are not so common, perhaps because, representing permanent settlements, they required no distinctive term; that

[1] "There is no Northgate, Eastgate, or Westgate in Middlesex: what then is Southgate?" (Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography*, new edition, 1885, p. 25.)

[2] S. O. Addy, *Evolution of the English House*, 1898, pp. 34–5.

is to say, it was the temporary hut which called forth the need of a separate name. Against twenty "Summers" there are opposed only nine "Winters," reckoning the seventeen Winterbournes once only: it is questionable whether this last name is an instance in point, since it probably denotes a site where an intermittent stream was wont to appear after rainy seasons. From the nature of the case, we should expect no "Summerbournes." Of the other Winters, one or two, like Winteringham, may be reminiscent of a Saxon family name. The late Mr T. W. Shore considered that not only the various Winterbournes, but also Winterton and Winteringham, signify "Wendish" settlements, *Windr* being an old name applied to Northern nations[1]. This idea seems too fanciful and strained, the more so, because, in the case of Winterbourne, a simple explanation based on familiar physical phenomena is at hand.

Returning to our proper subject, we find a curious superstition which merits detailed examination, namely the general antipathy of country folk to burial on the North side of the churchyard. This strange aversion must have come within the experience of most antiquaries and folk-lorists. During the peregrinations of many years, the writer has collected a large number of instances illustrative of the belief, and a few of these will be submitted.

So recently as the year 1904 there was buried, in a quiet Surrey churchyard, the body of a well-known public man who had poisoned himself shortly after receiving a sentence of penal servitude. The newspapers duly recorded that the interment took place on the North side of the churchyard, and that a specially adapted service was read, but no one seemed to notice the significance of these details. An explanation, as we shall see, is nevertheless discoverable. A few years earlier, in 1899, during the discussion of a Burials Bill, then before the House of Commons, it was alleged that in most village churchyards there remained burial accommodation sufficient for some time to come. Against this plea, it was urged that the space still available was usually situated on the North side of the graveyard, and that there was a rooted objection among villagers to burial in that

[1] T. W. Shore, *Origin of the Anglo-Saxon Race*, 1906, pp. 226, 229, 304.

quarter. The Home Secretary replied that he had never heard of the prejudice, and a somewhat general incredulity as to its existence was revealed among the Commoners. Thereupon a correspondent, writing to *Notes and Queries*, clinched the argument based on superstition by quoting the inscription on a tombstone in the graveyard of Epworth, the village of the Wesleys. The epitaph ran thus:

> "That I might longer undisturb'd abide,
> I choos'd to be laid on this Northern side[1]."

Such a wish was no new, crazy fancy, for earlier instances are on record. From an account published in 1657, we learn that Benjamin Rhodes, steward to Thomas, Earl of Elgin, requested to be buried on the North side of Malden churchyard (Bedford), "to crosse the received superstition[2]." Combining the last two incidents, we may infer that the Northern portion of the churchyard was little used, and that neglect was due to its ill-repute. So, then, in the remark made by Edmund Burke, "I would rather sleep in the Southern corner of a country churchyard than in the tomb of the Capulets[3]," the indication of the Southern position is not mere rhetoric. Let us proceed to examine some further instances, in order to show that our generalization is sound.

At Winterton, a village not far from Epworth, at the time of the controversy of which mention has been made, the burials on the North side had all taken place within living memory. It was a matter of doubt whether "a dozen gravestones, over fifty years old, could be found in as many parishes in [that] deanery on the North sides of churchyards[4]." Another Lincolnshire village, Springthorpe, had no Northern graves; while, at Saltfleetby All Saints, so recently as 1880, as the present writer can avouch, not a single stone or grave existed on the North side, though monuments were closely crowded on the South side. Dr Alfred Gatty, who was vicar of Ecclesfield, Yorkshire, for more than fifty years, once stated that, in the early nineteenth century, there were practically no interments in the North yard of his

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 204.

[2] *Lore and Legend of the English Church*, p. 80. Cf. Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 293; other instances given.

[3] E. Stone, *God's Acre*, 1858, p. 390. [4] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 276.

church. In the year 1823 a clergyman was buried in that portion, and the evil reputation was banished[1]. Morwenstow, Cornwall, Hawker's beloved "Daughter of the Rock," formerly exemplified the same superstition[2]. The prejudice was especially strong in Norfolk[3]. It was also very prevalent in the neighbouring county of Suffolk[4]. At Newbourne, in that county, while the graveyard was filled on the South, East, and West, the turf had long appeared unbroken on the North. "The bishop had never walked on it," so ran the story, and all endeavours to break down the superstition proved fruitless for many years[5]. In churchyards situated in the Border Counties, on both banks of the Tweed, the prejudice is barely removed even at the time of writing. John Brand (A.D. 1744–1806) discovered that, in his day, the belief still pervaded many "inland and Northern parts," but had been "eradicated from the vicinity of the metropolis." He quotes numerous authorities to prove that the prejudice was also rampant in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales[6]. Another eighteenth century writer, none other than Gilbert White, recorded that the Southern side of the churchyard of Selborne had "become such a mass of mortality that no person [could] be there interred without disturbing or displacing the bones of his ancestors." However, "two or three families of the best repute" had begun to bury on the North side, and White had hoped that, by degrees, the prejudice might wear out[7].

Frequently we encounter evidence which, without directly alluding to the superstition, implies its existence. A curious bequest made at the close of the seventeenth century will serve as an illustration. Archbishop Tenison having presented a burial ground to the parish of Lambeth, it was deemed necessary, in order to lessen the number of Southern interments, to charge double fees for that portion of the yard[8].

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., v. p. 126.
[2] Letter from R. S. Hawker, in *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., VI. p. 235.
[3] T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, *Domestic Folk-Lore*, 1881, p. 62.
[4] Brand, *op. cit.* II. p. 293. (Particulars given.)
[5] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 276.
[6] Brand, *op. cit.* II. p. 292 et seqq. See also *God's Acre*, pp. 390–1.
[7] G. White, *Selborne*, ed. J. E. Harting, 1880, p. 418.
[8] G. Masters, *Lambeth Parish Church*, 1904, p. 75.

Additional testimony, though inconclusive, is gleaned from an examination of the position of the fabric with respect to the churchyard. As already stated, in many instances the North yard is all but non-existent. This is the case at Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex; Caterham and Weybridge, Surrey; Littleton, Middlesex; Barnet, Hertfordshire; North Cockerington, Lincolnshire; Upper Beeding, Falmer, Street, Bishopstone, and West Dean, in Sussex; Manningford Bruce, Bradford-on-Avon, and Amesbury, in Wiltshire. The list could be greatly extended. At the last-named village there were no gravestones in the North yard at the time of my visit in 1901. Mr J. T. Micklethwaite has pointed out that, when an aisle was added to Wakefield parish church during the twelfth century, it was built on the North side, because at that period all the burials were on the South side[1]. One is compelled to regard this line of evidence as only partially satisfactory, not because the instances are insufficiently numerous, but because cases can be cited where the South yard, not the North, is very narrow and insignificant. At Whitchurch, Oxfordshire; Alciston, Sussex; Hatfield Peverel, Essex; and Chertsey, Surrey, the burial ground is cut off almost sheer with the South side of the church. Nevertheless these instances are much fewer than those in which the North yard is so treated, and to this extent the theory stands good.

More satisfactory confirmation of the belief is afforded by the actual disuse of the North graveyard in many parishes. A reference to Fig. 21 (p. 77 *supra*) will show that, a century back, scarcely a headstone was to be seen on the North side of Chislehurst churchyard, yet we know that numerous examples existed on the South side. One may visit village after village and find that the tombstones on the North side are all erections belonging to the last half-century. The writer's notebook abounds with instances of this kind, but it would serve no purpose to give the catalogue here. Two or three striking examples may, however, be quoted. At Faringdon, or Farington, Hampshire, where Gilbert White was once curate, there is a large strip of graveyard towards the North, yet, on visiting the place in 1899, I found not a single tombstone in that quarter. At Yateley, in the same

[1] J. T. Micklethwaite, in *The Builder*, LVI. (1889), p. 184.

county, the Southern area has been enlarged, though the Northern portion was still partly available. Strangest of all was the case of Eversley, which is not far distant from the last-named parish, and which is always associated with the name of Charles Kingsley. Here, at the date just mentioned, an additional plot of burial-ground on the opposite side of the road had been consecrated, yet the Northern part of the old yard remained unfilled. Whatley, in Somerset, had only four graves on the North side

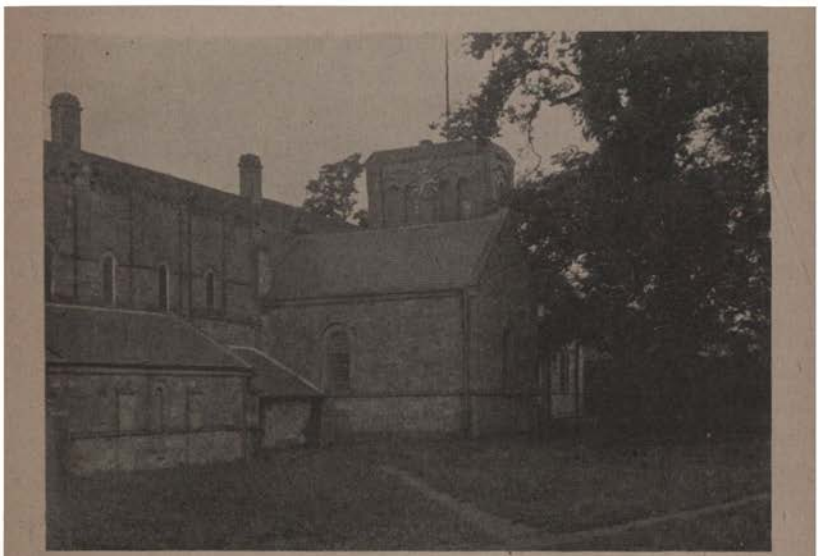

FIG. 67. Norham churchyard, Northumberland. North side, showing the undisturbed turf, and absence of tombstones.

in 1910, and all of these were recent. The North yard was, indeed, small, yet it still had accommodation, in spite of which fact the churchyard had evidently been enlarged on the South. Widdicombe, Devonshire, had no Northern tombstones in 1906, and Denton, in Sussex, but one stone on the North side in 1910. In the same year, I found no stones on the North yard proper at Norham, Northumberland; a group of elms occupied the space enclosed by the Northern boundary and an imaginary line continued from the East wall of the church (Fig. 67). In 1911, no North stones existed at Ford, Sussex, and Abbotsham and Countisbury, Devon.

A note of warning must now be uttered. The antiquary who is bent on examining this question will doubtless be guided, in the absence of documentary proof and of modern excavations, by two kinds of visible evidence: the level, unbroken condition of the turf, and the age of the tombstones, if these be present. A perfectly even area of turf is, as we shall see, not distinctly conclusive against the existence of former interments, since it may only imply carelessness in the raising, or in the preserving, of any possible grave-mounds. The evidence deduced from tombstones, too, must always be judiciously weighed. The absence, or the modernity, of the monuments is a fair test, if applied only to the period during which such memorials are known to have been erected. But the investigator will be on his guard against giving what Bishop Butler, in fine phrase, termed "an otiose assent." If the level state of the sward agrees with absence of gravestones, we may infer, either that no burials have taken place, or that they have been of a peculiar and exceptional nature. The wearing down of undisturbed mounds by atmospheric denudation may be left out of consideration, as being an unlikely occurrence.

Speaking generally, the upright headstone and the outdoor altar-tomb go back no farther than the middle of the seventeenth century[1]. It has been surmised that existing churchyard monuments which exhibit an earlier date may have been, in some cases, originally set up inside the building[2]. But genuine outdoor stones are found which belong to the late sixteenth century at least. There are two dwarf headstones on the South side of Branscombe churchyard, Devon, dated 1570 (? 1579) and 1580 respectively[3]. Headstones belonging to the fifteenth century have been recorded from Thrapstone, Northampton; Lavenham, Suffolk; Blyborough and Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincolnshire; and Loversall, Yorkshire[4]. An allusion to the upright stone occurs in *Hamlet*:

[1] M. H. Bloxam, *Monumental Architecture*, 1834, p. 262.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Reliquary*, XV., 1909, p. 22.

[4] *Durham Arch. Trans.*, V. p. 103. (Quoted in *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., IX. p. 56.) See also *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., VIII. pp. 452–3. *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, VII. p. 299.

"He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone[1]."

Where flat slabs occur in the churchyard, they are frequently a century earlier than the upright stones. Specimens of these early "ledger stones" may be seen in the church porches at High Halden, Kent (1583), and Wellington, Somerset (1589). There seems to be little doubt that this form of monument is much older as a class than the vertical, lettered stone. The ledger stone is a familiar object on the floors of churches, as a Mediaeval relic, and it is, no doubt, this kind of monument which is referred to as having been sometimes ejected from the sacred building[2]. There is strong reason for believing that rude, uninscribed wooden crosses preceded the upright headstones.

Working by the light of these facts, the searcher will discover that there is ample proof of the unpopularity of the North graveyard for three centuries past. And it would appear that there is good ground for the supposition that the unpopularity was as great, or even greater, during the long period which elapsed before stone monuments came into general use. These conclusions are based on the cumulative evidence of individual instances, but some remarkable exceptions to the rule demand due consideration.

Frequently, where one finds the oldest headstones on the North side, a probable reason can be advanced. Thus, in Norfolk, a county where the superstition is common, the three contiguous parishes of Garvestone, Reymerstone, and Thuxton, have the majority of burials on the North side. The explanation may be that the main entrance to the church, in each case, is by the North porch. Expressed otherwise, the North yard is the

[1] *Hamlet*, Act iv. Sc. 5.

[2] Further references on the general subject will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., I. pp. 105, 466; 8th Ser., XI. p. 428; XII. pp. 17, 91, 175, 357. T. Hearne, *Collection of Curious Discourses*, 1771, I. p. 226. J. Savage, in *Memorabilia*, 1820, pp. 316–8. Note also the horizontal stones with inlaid brasses, dating from the 13th century (H. W. Macklin, *Monumental Brasses*, 1898, pp. 48, 51). *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, XX. p. 220.

portion most traversed by the villagers on their way to the services[1]. Burlingham St Andrew has the North side of the yard well filled, while, so late as 1899, there were no burials on the South side. This is the more extraordinary, since the parishioners used the Southern porch as an entrance, and the local territorial family, the Northern[2]. We might conjecture, though there are no data at hand, that this was a case like that of Selborne, described by White, in which some highly-placed person or persons set a bold example, and helped to destroy the tradition. At Martin Hussingtree, near Worcester, all the burials, down to the year 1853, were on the North side, but it is noteworthy that the only entrance to the church was from that quarter[3]. Similarly, at Oystermouth, Glamorganshire, the graves were thickly clustered to the North of the church. A few only lay at the East and West; and not one on the South, but here, again, the sole access to the building was from the North[4]. Numerous other instances have come under the writer's own notice, tending to show that the objection to Northern burial is partly neutralized by the position of the church door, especially in those cases where only one door exists. Should there be two or three entrances to the church, the one most employed seems to be connected with the burial customs—the Western entrance to a smaller degree than the other. Needless to say, it is not the position of the doorway which primarily provoked the belief, though it may have modified the practice. As a matter of actual statistics, it will be found that, where there are two or three ways of approach, the South door is the one most used.

Is it a coincidence that the South is the prevailing quarter for the churchyard yew and the ancient cross, and that this sunny side has other superstitions attached to it? Mr Harry Hems asserts, with truth, that churches and churchyards generally lie to the North of the roads which give access to them (cf. p. 335 *supra*), and he seems to imply that some cases of preference may be explained by the position of the roads which lead to the fabric[5]. But surely, this is mistaking the effect for the

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 496.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 1st Ser., VIII. p. 207.
[4] *Ibid.*, 1st Ser., VI. pp. 112–113.
[5] *Ibid.*, 9th Ser., VII. p. 113.

cause. The problem is: why should the churches have been built on the North side of the road? Had they been erected on the opposite (South) side, worshippers would have been admitted from the reverse point of the compass (the North). Some early pagan belief influenced the choice of position; casual or arbitrary circumstances, including, occasionally, the disposition of roads and pathways, may have held the belief in check. The road, assuming that it existed before the church, could scarcely have influenced the position of the latter, in the absence of superstition. While we admit that Mr Hems's rule is fairly safe, it must not be forgotten that, where churches are built to the South of the road, the pathway often winds round the Western tower to give admission by a South door—an important aim with the builder.

Candour now compels us to notice a few records, which, in view of the particulars already given, seem inexplicable. The church of Ashby-de-la-Zouch is said to be built so near the South wall, as to indicate that the North side was clearly intended for burial[1]. Streatley, in Berkshire, is one example out of a fair-sized list, exhibiting a large North yard with very old stones. The ancient church of Swanscombe, Kent, had, on the whole, its oldest monuments towards the North, but the South doorway had been blocked by masonry. In most instances of this kind there is doubtless some circumstance, or series of circumstances, which would explain the departure from custom. Let us pause a moment to consider the exact importance of these exceptions.

The headstones, it will be remembered, carry us back only a few centuries. But, so far as these memorials reach, they tell overwhelmingly in favour of the superstition. Twenty years ago, this evidence was much more patent to the eye. A very general exception, however, must be made of the town churchyards, in which the old tombstones are often found evenly distributed over the available space. Several reasons may be adduced for this non-observance of the usual practice. The town church, as a rule, stands centrally in its graveyard; it is commonly approached by several alleys and paths, leading from

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., v. p. 332.

a thoroughfare or market-place; it is frequently cruciform in plan, with North and South doors, and this design, wherever met with, seems to have had some effect in counteracting the fears of the ignorant. Above all these reasons, must be set the fact that populous districts would soonest lose touch with the superstition, so that, even before the era of headstones, the belief retained but a comparatively feeble foothold among the inhabitants of towns. The argument from monuments fails in cases such as these. We must seek the tradition in the rural districts, and turn back to a time when it was more firmly held. We shall then see that the present exceptions, numerous as they are, cannot invalidate the general practice. They represent what Professor L. C. Miall, writing on a vexed question in botany, calls "negative exceptions." I venture to repeat his witty illustration: "A wooden leg is used to enable a man to walk when he has lost his natural leg. If you saw a one-legged man walking with a pair of crutches, and no wooden leg at all, would that shake your belief in the motive for using wooden legs[1]?" The "negative exceptions" which we have been studying may, indeed, testify to a weakening of tradition, or occasionally, to its apparent local non-existence, but they do not abolish it, or change its purport one whit. How it chances that, of two adjacent parishes, the present-day evidence shows the belief at work in the first, but seemingly unknown, or in abeyance, in the second, is a matter upon which we can only speculate. The puzzle reminds one of the difficulty which meets the palaeontologist when he strives to explain why one line of animal descent stops, and remains fixed, while another continues to develop; why creatures which seem to be completely adapted to their surroundings become extinct; why one species or genus is taken, and another left.

We now go behind the testimony of the tombstones, and meet some apparent contradictions. When the turf on the Northern side of a churchyard is broken up, for the first time, as the sexton thinks—since there are neither mounds nor tombstones to serve as "frail memorials," bones are sometimes discovered. At Bottesford, Lincolnshire, though the North yard had been wholly unused until our day, yet when graves

[1] L. C. Miall, *Round the Year*, 1896, pp. 79–80 (cf. p. 229).

were actually dug, traces of former burials were revealed[1]. The churchyard of Swinhope, in the same county, yielded stronger proofs. Seven or eight very old interments, closely grouped, were found; in one case there was a coffin formed of loose slabs of chalk[2]. The late Canon A. R. Pennington, of Utterby, again in the same county, told the writer of his surprise when bones were thrown out of the first grave made towards the North of his church. It is a fair inference that no mounds had been raised over the earlier interments. Further instances could be added, but these will suffice. The details concerning the Swinhope interments are peculiar, especially the finding of the chalk coffin. These particular burials may point to the building of the church on a pre-Christian site. The other examples, however, have a different interpretation; namely, that the Northern portion of the churchyard was formerly reserved for the bodies of murderers, suicides, excommunicated persons, and still-born or unbaptized children[3]. That the custom is not yet obsolete is attested by the case already described on p. 341 *supra*, which is one of many.

This ecclesiastical rule has found its expression in literature. A modern poet, Professor A. E. Housman, has deftly wrought the tradition and the practice into his sad story, *A Shropshire Lad*:

> "To South the headstones cluster,
> The sunny mounds lie thick;
> The dead are more in muster
> At Hughley than the quick.
> North, for the soon-told number,
> Chill graves the sexton delves,
> And steeple-shadowed slumber
> The slayers of themselves."

Parochial histories supply the facts necessary for the confirmation of the tradition. Brand cites the case of a burying-ground in Edinburgh, where the North was reserved for the unbaptized and suicides. The graveyard belonged to the Quakers, and thus is of especial interest[4]. Another record tells how, a century ago, the body of a murderer who had been executed at Lincoln

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., VI. p. 132. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Brand, *op. cit.* II. p. 297. *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., II. p. 55; V. p. 126.

[4] Brand, *op. cit.* II. p. 297.

was carried to Swine, over the Yorkshire boundary, and was there interred on the North side "as the proper place in which to bury a felon[1]." To the Irish peasantry, the North is the "wrong side," and we have a contemporary account of a murder in the year 1786, which incidentally states that the malefactor was buried on the "wrong side" of Turlagh churchyard[2]. Miss Gordon-Cumming found that, among the Hebrideans, the belief was full of vitality. A young Englishman, who had committed suicide, was carried head foremost to a grave on the North side of Portree church, and was there buried, with his head towards the East, instead of towards the West. Even this qualified reception into consecrated ground sometimes meets with opposition, from fear that a suicide so buried will cause the herrings to desert the coast. The suspicious fishermen have been known to dig up a corpse from the kirkyard, secretly, by night, and to re-inter the accursed thing either on the shore, at low-water mark, or on the summit of a high mountain. Burials of this kind have taken place on the top of Aird Dhubh, and also on a mountain on the border of Inverness and Ross-shire, two years after the original sepulture[3].

Still bearing on this question, it has been suggested that a part of the churchyard, presumably the Northern, was formerly left unconsecrated for the burial of such persons as have been enumerated. Burn, in his *History of Parish Registers*, expressly states this as a fact, and gives, as an example, "the single woman's churchyard," in Southwark, where the dead bodies of the inmates of the licensed stews were buried[4]. This part of the graveyard was frequently known as the "back side[5]." The West of England tradition taught that this area was designedly left unconsecrated to serve as a playground for the village children. To speak more generally, the North was reserved for the village sports during the period when these were permitted in the churchyard. And, although there seems no clear proof

[1] T. Thompson, *History of the Church and Priory of Swine*, 1824, p. 145.

[2] Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 294.

[3] C. F. Gordon-Cumming, *In the Hebrides*, 1883, p. 185.

[4] J. Burn, *History of Parish Registers in England*, 1829, p. 96 n.

[5] T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, *Old English Social Life*, 1898, p. 148.

that butts for the use of archers were set up in the churchyard itself, the ground immediately adjoining the North boundary was so used. Such a strip of land, of some length, known as "the Butts," lies to the North of the churchyard at Beeston-next-Mileham, in Norfolk[1], and at Coleshill, in Warwick. The theory of non-consecration, though not for the purposes just named, receives some support from Durandus, who observes that to be buried on the North side is to be buried "out of sanctuary[2]." And through all the centuries which have rolled away since the date of this learned ecclesiastic, the country folk have shunned the North side, which lies "benighted in the midday sun." There was always a dislike of lying alone in death. The accustomed path, leading to the South door, was trodden by the assembling worshippers[3]. Under the shadow of the graveyard cross or the sombre yew the country folk could stop to whisper a prayer. In far-away times, Gregory the Great had taught that it is more profitable to be buried in the churchyard than in the distant cemetery, because, in the former case, the survivors may frequently behold the sepulchres as they enter the sacred building, and may put forth their petitions. (Cf. p. 262 *supra*.)

The distant cemetery, mentioned by Gregory, seems oftentimes to have formed an incentive to church-building in its neighbourhood. It would appear that the earliest Christian graveyards, like the cemeteries of the heathen, were often unenclosed. Being hallowed spots, a preaching cross would be erected near the graves. The setting up of a cross, the "truly precious rood," must precede the actual building of the church, according to the decree of the Emperor Justinian (A.D. 530). This act of consecration was the work of the bishop of the diocese. Durandus notices the claim of some churchmen that a space of thirty feet around the church ought to be set apart for burial, while others contended that the space actually

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., II. p. 55. Cf. A. Jessopp, *Before the Great Pillage*, 1901, p. 28 n.

[2] Quoted by H. Hems, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VII. p. 113. I cannot find the exact words attributed to Durandus, though they are in harmony with his remarks in the *Rationale*, lib. v., c. 14, 15, concerning unbaptized and stillborn children, as well as those persons who die in mortal sin.

[3] G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, 1903, I. p. 374.

enclosed by the circuit of the bishop was sufficient[1]. Though the cross may at first have been portable and adapted only for temporary use, yet a permanent symbol was frequently employed. The heathen Saxons are said to have had a rooted dread of entering an enclosed place of worship, lest they should be the victims of supposed magical rites[2]. An enclosed graveyard was also a decided innovation. So late as the reign of Canute, one class of building, the "feld-cirice" (= field-church), was unprovided with a graveyard. As time passed away, however, boundary hedges were planted, or walls were built around to form a burial-ground. The sacred garth, as well as the building, became a sanctuary, with its "benefit of adjuration," and its right of appeal to trial by ordeal. The actual enclosure of spaces around the churches dates from about the year A.D. 750. (Cf. remarks on the early cemeteries in Chap. VI.) The practice must have been loosely observed, for we find, down to the year A.D. 1603, statutes and canons repeatedly enforcing the law[3].

Chance excavations sometimes attest the early laxity of custom. Outside the churchyard wall of Kirby Grindalythe, in the East Riding, stretching towards the West, are many ancient interments. This fact seems to indicate, either that the Norman church originally stood in an unfenced portion of the hillside, a part of the cemetery being excluded when the wall was built, or that the open wold had been used for burials, Christian or pagan, before the church was erected[4]. Gilbert White was of opinion that the churchyard of Selborne was once larger, and had extended to what was, in his day, the vicarage garden[5]. Maplescombe church, the ruins of which were referred to on p. 38, seems to have never been properly fenced in from the fields. The retired churchyard of Branxton, in Northumberland,

[1] Durandus, *Rat. Div. Officiorum*, lib. v., c. 12. Sir R. Phillimore, *Eccles. Law*, 1873, II. p. 1761. E. S. Armitage, *op. cit.* p. 116. The subject is discussed by G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. pp. 254–6.

[2] S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of the West*, 1899, II. pp. 38–40.

[3] Phillimore, *op. cit.* II. 842–3, 1758, 1780. G. Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* I. p. 362. E. L. Cutts, *Parish Priests and their People in the Middle Ages of England*, p. 53.

[4] I. Taylor, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Ser., VII. pp. 112–3.

[5] G. White, *Selborne*, p. 418.

which lies within a bowshot of Flodden Field, has at least two features which are illustrative of our subject. The present churchwarden, Mr John Rankin, the representative of a family which has long held that office, informs me that the graveyard was formerly unfenced, save on the South side, where a thorn hedge separated it from the road. On this side, also, there is a narrow strip of land which contains no graves, and which, Mr Rankin asserts, has, through an oversight, never been consecrated. (Cf. p. 343 *supra*.) The churchyard at Norton, near Evesham, was unenclosed, except on the Eastern side, down to the year 1844. It stood in a grass field which formed part of the church glebe, thus illustrating Wordsworth's lines, descriptive of an Oxfordshire parsonage:

> "Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
> Is marked by no distinguishable line[1]."

The sonnet from which these lines are taken seems to show clearly that the poet was writing of a churchyard which was open on one side. Again, one often discovers churches of ancient foundation standing apart in the fields, and having a fence composed of wooden rails or iron hurdles of such modern date that one is forced to believe that the area has only been shut in for a few generations. The church of Little Washbourne, Gloucestershire, already ruinous when I saw it in 1888, is an instance which comes to mind. The tiny church of Woldingham (Fig. 68), which is situated near the escarpment of the North Downs, lay in the open fields, and the ground was apparently unenclosed down to the year 1852. The building, which measured only 30 feet by 17 feet, was rudely constructed of flints and "firestone" (from the Upper Greensand), but has since been restored more than once. The old structure was "desolate [and] dilapidated" so far back as the time of Evelyn[2]. The illustration shows the restored church of a century ago. To-day the building is approached by a short road. The visitor will notice how small a strip of ground was left on the North side when the boundaries were marked out. Seeking examples elsewhere, we observe that, in the marshland of East

[1] Wordsworth, *A Parsonage in Oxfordshire*, ll. 1–2.

[2] J. Evelyn, *Diary*, ed. W. Bray, n.d. (Chandos Classics), p. 397.

Lincolnshire, churches must have been built before the district was effectively drained, and therefore, before the existing boundary ditches or dykes were cut[1].

The prejudice against burial on the North side can be traced beyond the advent of Christianity. It is one of those "clinging faiths and fears" which beset the early folk of these islands. As a result of the examination of several hundred British barrows, Canon Greenwell found that, in secondary burials, bodies were rarely deposited on the North side of the mound, the most

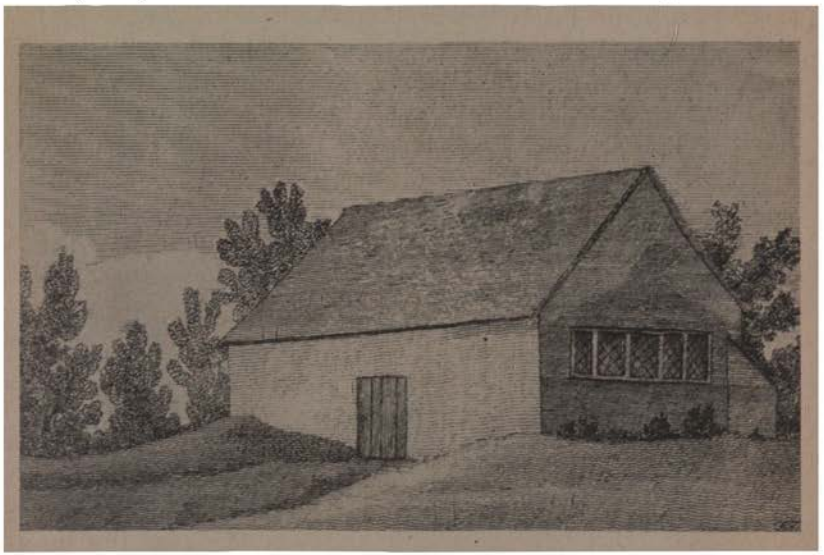

FIG. 68. The restored church of Woldingham, Surrey, as it appeared in 1809. (Manning and Bray.) The view seems to be taken from the North side. Behind the church, on the South side, is a large yew, much decayed, and partially hollow. To the right, just out of the drawing, is a huge ash, which to-day measures 20 feet in circumference at a height of 3 feet from the ground. The churchyard was probably unenclosed until a comparatively late date.

favoured positions being towards the South and East[2]. Mr J. R. Mortimer, after quoting Canon Greenwell's observations, confirms them by the testimony of the mounds of

[1] The churches of Sompting and Clapham, Sussex, at the foot of the Downs, seem to have been originally unenclosed.

[2] W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, pp. 12–13; cf. T. Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain*, p. 188.

Yorkshire. Canon Atkinson's experiences yielded similar results. During the course of many years, he opened some eighty "houes" or grave-mounds in his own district of Danby-in-Cleveland, and found one interment only in which the body "lay a little, and but a little, North of the magnetic East-and-West line[1]" (i.e. the median line). The evidence derived from megalithic monuments and prehistoric dwellings and settlements tends the same way. The chilly North was shunned; the brilliant East and the gracious South were courted. These ancient preferences were emphasized in the building of temples and Christian places of worship. Egregious among these old-world superstitions stands the hatred of the North. All the inherited antipathies of primeval folk were long retained by their civilized successors, and hence the Northern portion of the graveyard was allotted to those who were deemed spiritually undeveloped or spiritually lost.

Another fact which tends to prove the continuity of the superstition is that, during the Romano-British period, the bodies of persons who had committed suicide were not allowed to be burnt. The prohibition was afterwards extended to those who had died in their infancy[2].

Surveying the general question of suicide, one or two intermediate stages of folk-custom may be noted. In the early days of English history, suicides and murderers were buried at cross-roads. It has been argued that this procedure was not altogether intended to heap indignity on the corpse, but that the intersecting roads were emblematic of the Cross, for which reason such spots were therefore deemed self-consecrated[3]. That this idea was prevalent two or three hundred years ago, one would not care to deny; nevertheless it was a late accretion. Else, why was a stake driven through the body of the person so interred? Dishonour to the dead may not, indeed, have been the primary motive which impelled the survivors to behave in this manner, although a desire to prevent the ghost walking was

[1] J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, pp. xxvi–xxvii. J. C. Atkinson, letters in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VIII. p. 335.

[2] T. Wright, *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 2nd edition 1861, p. 329.

[3] W. Andrews, *Curious Church Customs*, p. 144.

doubtless a strong constituent[1]. The living would naturally object to the burial of a criminal or murderer near an inhabited house[2]; the ghost, angry at being disembodied, according to the elementary notions of our forefathers, might walk abroad, and wreak vengeance or disaster on whomsoever it would. This fear was common among priscan folk, and is widespread even at the present day. Professor Frazer has shown how the natives of Uganda bury still-born babes, and children born feet foremost, at cross-roads. Women, passing by, throw dust or grass on the mound to prevent the spirit entering themselves and being reborn. The bodies of suicides are also burned at cross-roads. Westermarck has collected and collated many analogous practices and beliefs from such far-sundered countries as India and Servia, Japan and Morocco[3]. If, following this high authority, we are disposed to agree that the crossways were believed to disperse such energy as might be ascribed to the deceased person[4], that this mode of interment diverted diseases, and warded off all evil influences from the living, we shall the more readily perceive why the superstition retained its vitality in later times. When the Cross became the symbol of the new religion, the old belief about suicides was reinforced so far as the idea of protection was concerned, though the superstition might be weakened in respect of any supposed indignity to the dead. Even here, however, there is room for further investigation, and writers like Mr Andrew Lang have questioned whether the supposed efficacy of the Cross is a sufficient explanation[5]. The idea of abandonment, as it appears to the present writer, must have been an essential portion of the ceremony, and this was the natural consequence of the theory that the soul of the suicide was self-doomed to perish.

A middle stage of the belief is illustrated by the Scottish practice of burying self-murderers outside the churchyard, but close by the wall. (Cf. p. 352 *supra*.) This plan was afterwards

[1] E. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 1908, II. pp. 255–6.

[2] A. Lang, in *Folk-Lore*, 1909, XX. pp. 88–9.

[3] Westermarck, *op. cit.* II. Chap. XXV. which is full of curious lore concerning suicide. Cf. J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 1910, II. p. 508; III. p. 152.

[4] Westermarck, *op. cit.* II. p. 256 n.

[5] A. Lang, *loc. cit.*

modified to the extent of allowing the body to come technically within the yard, but to be placed actually beneath the wall, so that no one might walk over the grave[1]. In England, we find constant reference to the burial of suicides in the open fields. The custom of driving a stake through the bodies of persons found *felo de se* has been noticed. This brutal treatment, excusable in folk who, in the dawn of the world, had a real horror of ghosts and vampires, was only abolished by law in the year 1823[2]. Yet, as if to prove the unequal working of the human mind, and to exemplify the truism that like customs have not everywhere the same lease of life, we find remarkable exceptions to the rule. While the barbarous belief concerning suicide still held its sway, church discipline was, on the whole, gradually relaxing, and ordinary burials were permitted to take place within the sacred building. Then came the exception which we have examined. A certain part of the burial-ground was devoted to burials of murderers and suicides. In at least two cases, as attested by parish registers, the bodies of murderers were admitted into the church, though still on the North side of the fabric (A.D. 1616 and 1620)[3]. The fact is, that one can scarcely mention a single custom or tradition which has not been disregarded exceptionally at certain periods, though the main current has flowed on almost as strongly as ever. No doubt each particular infraction was the result of powerful local influences. For, even to this hour, as has been clearly shown, the body of the suicide or the manslayer may be interred in the churchyard, and yet remain, according to the superstition, "out of sanctuary."

[1] Westermarck, *op. cit.* II. p. 255.

[2] H. T. Stephen, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, ed. J. Stephen, 1868, IV. p. 152, et seqq. Sir R. Phillimore, *op. cit.* II. p. 860.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., V. p. 189. The burials of which particulars are given occurred at the church of St Nicholas, Newcastle. An invaluable bibliography of "Suicide" is given in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., IX. pp. 489–91. Westermarck, *op. cit.*, also gives voluminous references.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCHYARD YEW

THE student who attempts to master the problem of the churchyard yew finds himself in danger of being bowed down by the burden of conflicting facts and theories.

With respect to the facts, there lies at hand a note-book containing the jottings of years, but so plethoric are its pages, that a mass of detail must be correlated and much matter shorn away before the case can be presented with any degree of lucidity.

Concerning the theories, folk-memory lends us little help. It does not ring true, and there is more than a suspicion that it has been influenced by ideas gathered from the printed book of the ecclesiologist and the antiquary.

"Things are as they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be, wherefore, then, should we desire to be deceived?" Following the spirit of Butler's philosophy, let us leave aside all hypotheses for the present, and review the facts. It will conduce to clearness if the particulars are summarized in due order.

The botanist will tell us that the yew (*Taxus baccata*) is a fine-grained, slow-growing tree belonging to the sub-division Taxineae of the Natural Order Coniferae, or Pinaceae. Its timber is tough, durable, and elastic, so that there is some truth in the New Forest proverb: "A post of yew will outlast a post of iron." The trunk of the yew is deeply channelled, and its reddish-brown bark easily peels off. Looking at the narrow, leathery leaves, which are dark and glossy on the upper surface,

but rather pale on the undersides, one might casually conclude that they are arranged in two rows on opposite sides of the twig. Closer inspection, however, proves that the leaves spring from all sides of the axis, but that a twist at the base of each leaf gives a false appearance of a plain double series[1]. The yew is dioecious, that is, the male and the female flowers grow on separate trees, but occasionally both kinds of inflorescence may be seen on the same tree. Over a large area of the Northern Hemisphere our familiar yew is met with, and an allied species grows in North-East America and Japan. The columnar variety (var. *fastigiata*), known as the Irish, or Florence Court yew, is said to have originated as a wild sport at Florence Court, in county Fermanagh, about 130 years ago[2]. Its outline looks very unlike that of the common yew, which has horizontal branches, and it has no further practical bearing on our subject.

It is important to note that the yew is demonstrably indigenous to Britain. It can be traced back not merely to the Neolithic Age[3], but even to the Glacial period[4]; hence there need be no debate concerning its possible introduction in later times.

Whether the yew be poisonous—no unimportant matter, as will shortly be seen—has been discussed frequently and at great length. The disputants often argue at cross-purposes, each side in turn misapprehending the exact point at issue. Having read all the literature which is reasonably accessible on this subject, I am convinced of the overwhelming proof that the yew has poisonous properties, though the noxiousness may be comparatively slight at certain seasons, in certain years, and with respect to certain animals. The results are most fatal when the beasts eat the leaves on a fasting stomach. When the leaves

[1] J. T. B. Syme and J. E. Sowerby, *English Botany*, 3rd edition, 1868, VIII. pp. 276–7. *Ency. Brit.*, 9th edition, under "Yew." A good description is given by W. Dallimore, *Holly, Yew, and Box*, 1908, pp. 153–8. For an account of the timber, see G. S. Boulger, *Wood*, 2nd edition, 1908, p. 371, and plate.

[2] Sir J. D. Hooker, *Student's Flora*, 3rd edition, 1884, pp. 380–1. J. Lowe, *Yew-Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1897, p. 20.

[3] G. S. Boulger, *Familiar Trees*, n.d., 2nd Ser., p. 58.

[4] Sir J. Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, 2nd edition, 1897, p. 575. Sir A. C. Ramsay, *Geology and Geography of Great Britain*, 3rd edition, 1878, p. 358.

are dry and tough there is the additional evil of indigestibility. Yet there is an opposing fact. Mixed with three or four times their bulk of other food, green yew leaves are actually employed as fodder for cattle in times of scarcity. Records of this custom come from Hanover, Hesse, and other parts of the Continent. Stated in general terms, then, the poisonous principle (taxine) cannot be very intensely concentrated; it may even be inoperative until acted upon by the juices of the stomach. Again, the pulpy portion of the fruit is eaten with impunity, but the stones are considered highly injurious. Sufficient references are given in the footnote to obviate further discussion here[1], but it will be seen later that the modern theory was preceded by an empirical knowledge which harmonizes well with the ascertained facts.

The belief in the pernicious properties of the juice of the yew is, indeed, as old as Pliny, who tells us that arrows were dipped in the poison (*toxicum*), and that the hurtfulness might be neutralized by previously driving a brass nail into the tree[2]. He adds that some writers have asserted that *toxicum* was formerly *taxicum*, from the name of the yew (*taxus*). The assumption seems to be that *taxus* is connected not only with τάξος, a yew, but also with τόξον, a bow (τὰ τόξα=*bow and arrows*, and perhaps *arrows* only)[3], and τοξικὸν φάρμακον, poison. But even if these links be allowed, the claim is vitiated by the refusal of the lexicographers to admit such a word as *taxicum*.

Caesar informs us that Cativolcus, one of the rulers of the Eburones, poisoned himself with yew[4]. Since a doubt has been raised whether the Latin *taxus* and the Greek τάξος accurately represent our word "yew," it may be said that the latest authorities

[1] *Science Gossip*, XXII. pp. 116, 150, 191, 262; XXIII. p. 21; XXIV. pp. 44, 93, 142. G. White, *Nat. Hist. of Selborne*, Harting's edition, 1880, pp. 420–1. J. Carroll, in *Country Side*, III. p. 252. *Jour. Board Agric.* X. (1903), pp. 235–6. *Trans. Chem. Soc.* LXXXI. (1902), p. 874. Lowe, *Yew-Trees*, pp. 147 et seqq. E. Step, *Wayside and Woodland Trees*, 1904, p. 76, asserts that the "kernels" are not poisonous.

[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. XVI., c. 20.

[3] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 8th edition, 1883, s.v.

[4] Caesar, *De Bello Gall.*, lib. VI., c. 20.

on both languages give that rendering to the respective words[1]. It must nevertheless be observed that there is an alternative word in Greek, for one of the several meanings of σμῖλαξ, or μῖλαξ, is "yew." Pliny's word *tristis* (sad), applied to *taxus*, stands good therefore for the yew. It has been suggested that the Greek word is allied to τάξις, arrangement (from τάσσω = I arrange), the allusion being to the apparent double row of leaves.

Before leaving the philological section, some English equivalents of the word must be noticed. "Early Modern English" forms include *yewe*, *yeugh*, *eugh*, *yowe*, etc. These come to us from the Middle English *ew* or *u*, and these, again, represent the A.S. *īw* and *eów*[2]. A seventh century manuscript has a still earlier form, *īuu*, and this is said to be the oldest spelling in any Teutonic language[3]. There are, says the *Century Dictionary*, Danish, Old High German, Spanish, Old Irish, Welsh, Gaelic, and Cornish equivalents, and of these, the Celtic forms are possibly original and not derivative[4]. Professor W. W. Skeat supports the Celtic origin of the word *yew*, which, by the way, is quite distinct from the word *ivy*, although the various forms of *yew* and *ivy* suggest one another[5]. Dr Schrader says that the Old High German word *iva*, in the sense of "yew," disappears as we go further East, and, in Sclavonic dialects, signifies a willow. The same holds good of the word for "beech," and Dr Schrader believes that the change is due to the thinning out of these trees Eastwards. In Lithuania, again, the meanings of "fir" and "yew" run into each other[6]. Professor V. Hehn called attention to the same series of facts, from which he drew similar conclusions.

The etymological road leading us no further, we take counsel of the forester and the arboriculturist. We wish to ascertain the greatest age which the yew is believed to reach.

The older authorities followed implicitly the dictum of the

[1] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, W. Smith, *Latin Dict.*, 19th edition, s.v.

[2] *Cent. Dict.*, under "Yew." [3] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, IV. p. 532.

[4] *Cent. Dict.*, *loc. cit.* [5] W. W. Skeat, *Etymol. Dict.*, under "Yew."

[6] O. Schrader, *Prehist. Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, trans. J. B. Jevons, 1890, pp. 226, 274–5. See also V. Hehn, *Wanderings of Plants and Animals*, ed. J. S. Stallybrass, 1885, pp. 407–8.

Swiss botanist Augustin De Candolle, who, basing his conclusions upon a study of the annual rings of the yew, and upon the sizes of yews of known age, formulated the rule: An increase in diameter of one line annually. If we allow an average yearly growth of one line in diameter, we shall probably over-estimate the rate of growth for very aged trees ("*il est probable qu'on est au-dessus de la vérité*"), so that while we may, in practice, reckon each line of the diameter as a year, we shall, in reality, make the trees younger than they actually are[1]. De Candolle, in another place, admitted that for the first 150 years the annual growth somewhat exceeded a line in diameter, though for older trees it was less than this amount[2]. Abridging this rather involved statement, let us put the rule thus: Up to the age of 150 years the yews increase annually a line or a little more in diameter, and a little less than a line afterwards.

Since De Candolle's day, it has been contended that his estimate makes the trees too old. Dr J. Lowe, in his interesting volume on *Yew-Trees*, has combated the conclusions at some length; his chapters are here freely drawn upon and compared with my own private notes. Dr Lowe's estimate, taking young and old trees together, allows a growth of one foot in diameter for each period of 60–70 years. De Candolle's rule would make a like growth represent 144 years at least (1 foot = 144 lines), or, supposing him to have taken the line as one-tenth of an inch—as some writers mistakenly believe[3]—120 years, or a little over. In the absence of testimony to the contrary, I think we may safely consider that De Candolle's line was reckoned on the one-twelfth basis: indeed there appears to be no valid reason for doubting this. We note, in passing, that the calculations of Edward Jesse, the naturalist, made after measuring trees at intervals, agree closely with those of the Swiss savant[4].

[1] A. de Candolle, quoted by Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 46. The exact source is not given, but one may infer, from the context, that the rule is given in *Notice sur la Longévité des Arbes*, 1831. I have not seen this work, as it is not in the British Museum.

[2] Quoted by Lowe, *Yew-Trees*, pp. 45–6.

[3] *Science Gossip*, XXIV. (1888), p. 167. De Candolle's equation of the measurements of the largest yew at Fountains Abbey is consistent only on the basis of 12 lines to the inch (*Physiologie Végétale*, t. II. p. 1001).

[4] G. A. Hansard, *Book of Archery*, 1840, p. 328.

Between the estimates of De Candolle and those of Dr Lowe, but far nearer to those of the latter observer, is the determination adopted by Sir R. Christison and his son, Dr D. Christison. Working on the eminently scientific method of measuring the increase of girth at a fixed point during stated periods, these observers decided that one foot for every 75 years would be more than the average rate of increase[1]. The three varying results may therefore be thus stated:

De Candolle	1 foot represents	144 years
The Christisons ...	„ „ „	75 years
Dr Lowe	„ „ „	60–70, say 65 years

Mr J. E. Bowman, making use of the trephine, came to the conclusion that young trees may add two lines per year, and if the soil be very rich, three lines, but that, after a diameter of two feet has been reached, De Candolle's limit of one line yearly holds true. De Candolle's formula, Bowman considered, "makes old trees too young, and young trees too old." Commenting on Bowman's mode of experiment, Dr Lowe asserts that it has "no utility whatever," because the external rings of the tree—those reached by the trephine—are not concentric, and are not formed in the same manner as those of the young shoot. Further, Bowman's experiments seem to have been performed on young trees only[2].

The true estimate, therefore, seems to lie between the determinations of De Candolle and Dr Lowe respectively. The latter writer admits that De Candolle's rule is fairly sound when applied to young trees with undecayed centres, but he stipulates that the tree must be cut down and proved to have not more than one centre. He refers to the case of a yew in Kyre Park, Worcestershire, which possesses two huge trunks, united below, and he proceeds to argue that, if we suppose the tops to have been broken off underneath the junction, and young shoots to have sprung up from the base, the trees would have been deemed as old as our most noted specimens in the British Isles. Such a

[1] Sir R. Christison, *Trans. Bot. Soc. Edin.*, XIX. p. 11. Cited by Lowe: this volume is not in the British Museum.

[2] Lowe, *Yew-Trees*, p. 57.

case, however, would rarely be encountered in actual experience.

We will now examine De Candolle's "ring method" a little more closely. First, what is the botanical theory respecting the formation of the rings in a tree? In our climate trees make little or no growth during the winter season, hence the new spring wood, with its wide, thin-walled vessels, is rather sharply defined against the narrower, compact, dense-walled vessels which were formed in the preceding autumn or late summer. The successive concentric cylinders of new wood, therefore,

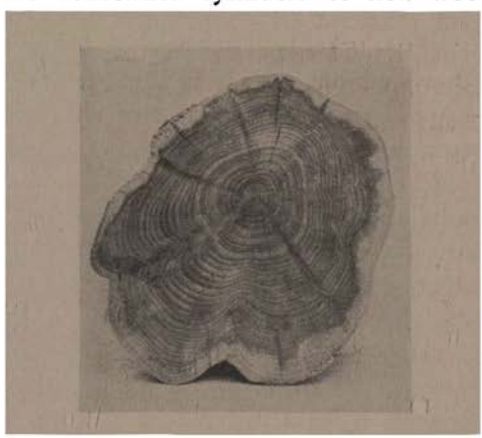

FIG. 69. Transverse section of yew, showing annual rings. Longest diameter, $5\frac{1}{2}''$; shortest, $4\frac{1}{8}''$; number of rings, 51. It will be noticed that the section is excentric; this is due to irregular growth. The light coloured, outer zone, is the alburnum, or sap-wood; the dark, inner zone, the duramen, or heart-wood. The large, radial cracks are the results of shrinkage. These cracks run along the lines of the medullary rays, though the actual rays are much too fine to be seen without a good lens. (For an excellent description of such a section, see G. S. Boulger, *Wood*, 2nd edition, 1908, p. 301.)

when seen in cross-section, appear as zones, or "annual rings." These rings are well shown in the transverse section of yew (Fig. 69). In vertical section the rings appear as parallel strips, forming what is popularly called the "grain" of the wood (Fig. 70). It is true, in general, that one ring represents one year's growth. The rule must, however, be applied under slight reserve. Dr D. H. Scott clamped the branch of an elm in June, thus increasing the pressure on the cells. The result was that

wood was formed similar to that which is usually associated with autumn. After six weeks, during which the nutrition had been practically uniform, the clamp was removed, and another ring was produced.

The conditions just described were artificial and abnormal, but varying temperatures, if extreme, might act in a similar manner. Sequoias and red-woods may naturally form several concentric wood rings in a year, a result probably due to alternations of heat and cold. Against the danger of over-calculation of age from neglecting such factors, may be set the consideration

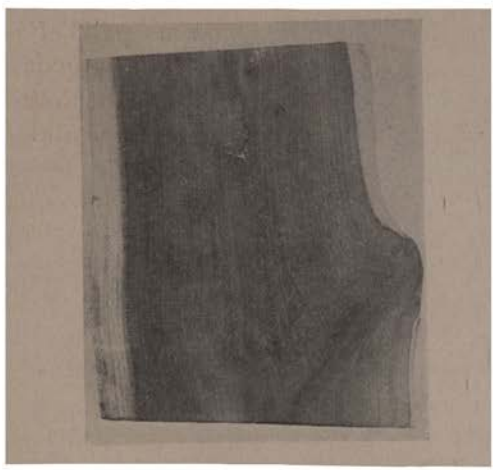

FIG. 70. Longitudinal, tangential section of yew. In this section, taken with the "grain," the annual rings appear as alternate parallel strips of dark and light wood. The tracheids, or elongated thick-walled cells, are invisible to the unaided eye.

A branch is seen emerging on the right, forming a "pin," which would be obnoxious to bowyers.

that, owing to damage by frost, or to seasonal peculiarities, no ring may be formed within the year[1]. In normal circumstances, "one ring, one year" is a trustworthy maxim. Unfortunately, to verify this rule, should its accuracy be challenged, the tree must be cut down—a most undesirable proceeding. Moreover,

[1] A. J. Harrison, in *Naturalists' Journal*, 1905, p. 200. See also H. Marshall Ward, *Timber, and some of its Diseases*, 1889, pp. 44–7. S. H. Vines, *Students' Text-Book of Botany*, 1896, pp. 197–9.

if the tree be aged, counting the rings is a matter of some difficulty; one must use a lens and a pair of needles, moving these "counters" as if scoring at a game of cribbage. Now Dr Lowe, while doubting whether the yew may not form more than one ring per year—a contingency that would seriously upset all computations based on this system—feels confident that in this country young trees produce one only. He is of opinion that the ring test consequently holds good for uninjured trees up to 200 or 250 years. Beyond that period, he asserts confidently that the yew sustains injuries from storm or disease sufficient to invalidate the rule. To the extent, let us say, of 250 years, Dr Lowe's assumption runs parallel with that of De Candolle, who believed that there is practically no limit to the age of the yew, except disease. After the third century, Dr Lowe, as we shall soon see, actually claims a more rapid rate of growth, at least, intermittently.

The errors to which De Candolle's method is liable are thus epitomized. A yew which has been maltreated by lopping or injured by the browsing of animals may thicken and form bosses, and so increase the apparent girth. Trunks may be fused together. Wounds may prevent the formation of rings. Small shoots may be enveloped by the spread of the "bark," and thus a vast number of rings may be formed which eventually become concentric[1].

Nevertheless, since we cannot always cut a tree down, some other method of estimating the age must be followed. And if the actual circumference be not always the true measure of the normal free-growing parent stem, our observations should, by way of counterpoise, be correspondingly numerous. Whoever has attempted to measure a yew, with the object of employing De Candolle's rule, will recognize the force of Dr Lowe's contentions, yet one cannot but think that the risk of error has been exaggerated.

We are told, again, that there may be a difference in the number of rings on the two sides of a tree, even at the same level, in other words, a given ring may not be everywhere of the same thickness. This is noticeable in the specimen, Fig. 69.

[1] *Yew-Trees*, pp. 42–3, and especially Chap. III.

In the famous yew of Darley Dale, Derbyshire, it is asserted that the number of rings varied from 33 to 66 in an inch of radius, taken horizontally—a curiously neat ratio[1]. Michel Montaigne, so far back as 1581, pointed out that the rings were narrower on the north side of the tree. Yet these occurrences do not hopelessly affect our conclusions. The writer possesses a section of a branch of yew from Offchurch, Warwickshire, which was over-developed on one side, the result of proximity to a stream, and of a sunny aspect. The consequent curvature of the heart wood, though certainly disappointing to the bowyer, who bought the tree, did not prove very troublesome even to the amateur ring-counter. Taking the average of a long series of years, and examining a large number of specimens, the inequalities in such specimens would be found to cancel each other. In an aged tree like that of Darley Dale, the coalescence of the rings would be far more perplexing than the unsymmetrical growth.

With respect to one source of error, Dr Lowe seems to answer his own objection. "A tree may have died on one side," says he, "or may have ceased forming, while the other side is growing vigorously." Yes, but in that case the error would be one of under-calculation; the yew would be credited with fewer years than the measurements warranted.

Once again, it is argued that not only may a particular ring have inequalities of width, but the different rings vary among themselves in thickness. And we have seen that growth does not increase uniformly with age. An oak of 50 years had a circumference equal to another which was four times that age. Nor is the rate of growth always uniformly diminished as the tree becomes older. De Candolle found an oak, 333 years old, which showed as great an increase between the rings of 320 and 330 as between those of 90 and 100 years. Now it is not mere captiousness to remark that these figures refer to an oak, not to a steady-growing yew, though Dr Lowe claims that the observation would apply equally well to the latter tree[2]. We may repeat: while variations in rainfall, temperature, and food-supply, correspondingly affect the rate of growth, it is a matter of common

[1] *Yew-Trees*, p. 43. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

knowledge that our seasons tend to follow ill-defined cycles, and that a series of such cycles may be expected to equalize each other with a fair approximation to exactitude.

A far graver indictment of De Candolle's figures is contained in the insinuation that his selected trees were stunted and ill-grown, so that the rate of growth was made to appear too slow[1]. The supposition, if well grounded, would severely shake De Candolle's rule, but at present it is a supposition merely, as

FIG. 71. Yew at West end of Tandridge churchyard, Surrey. Though hollow, it is one of the finest specimens in England.

readers of the *Physiologie Végétale* may learn for themselves. De Candolle did indeed believe that trees die from accident or disease rather than from old age, but how could the bias resulting from such an opinion make the age of a yew greater than it actually was? An injured tree whose development had been arrested would be credited with too few years rather than with too many. Take the case of the Tandridge yew, in Surrey (Fig. 71). Aubrey

[1] *Yew-Trees*, pp. 45–6. Cf. De Candolle's own precautions, *Physiologie Végétale*, t. II. pp. 977, 983–4.

found that this tree had a girth of 30 feet at a height of five feet from the ground. Manning and Bray, about 130 years later, gave the corresponding measurement as 32 feet 9 inches. To-day the reading is only 32 feet 4 inches. Allowing for some discrepancies in the modes of measurement, the results are striking. The explanation is that, though the tree is still vigorous, it has long been hollow, and growth must have been slight, if indeed there has not been an actual arrest for the past century.

The method, adopted by the two Christisons, of measuring a tree at known intervals of time, is perhaps open to less objection than that of assuming a mean rate of growth, based on the enumeration of the rings of selected specimens. A combination of both systems would be better, if not ideal. The "interval method," nevertheless, overlooks the objection that growth is not quite uniform. De Candolle urged, as already noticed, that the rate diminishes in aged trees, and gave several reasons. The roots are farther from the air, and they are also working in competition with those of neighbouring trees. Should the soil be rocky or otherwise uncongenial the lessened elasticity of the bark retards growth. Add to these factors the likelihood of oncoming disease, and the slackened development would be appreciable. Against these considerations, Dr Lowe boldly affirms that "there is abundant evidence to show that old trees grow, at intervals, much more rapidly than young ones"; but he makes this concession: "they do not, as I have said, grow uniformly, but have periods of comparative arrest of growth[1]." These pauses, he believes, are due to the overshadowing head of the tree. Were the head to be broken every half century or so, rapid growth would again commence. But to what degree does such a pollarding occur in nature? Does not the head continue, in the main, to overshadow the trunk and roots? (The lopping of yews for making bows, as apart from true pollarding, will be discussed later.) One reiterates, all systems are liable to error, but some systems are more accurate than others. And the "interval method," especially if supplemented by estimating the

[1] *Yew-Trees*, p. 64.

total number of rings, according to an ascertained standard rate of increase, still awaits the coming of a better system to supersede it.

The obtruding difficulty which now meets us is, Where are we to measure the girth? Sir Robert Christison thought the ground level best, but, wherever possible, he also measured the tree at five feet from the base[1]. Yews, however, frequently thicken upwards; there may be swellings under the branches; the stem is often encumbered by bunches of young sprays; aged trees are usually deformed, and are studded with knobs and excrescences. To follow Christison's plan with the trees at Dryburgh, Roseneath, and Sanderstead, and other yews which have protuberances at the base, would result in too liberal an estimate. The reaction of root-pressure tends to make trees "lift themselves out of the ground." Moreover, in exposed situations, scraping animals, such as rabbits and foxes, lay bare the roots of trees, and increase the apparent girth. Rain tends to wash away the soil, and so aids in the deception.

On the other hand, the level of the soil in churchyards is gradually rising (cf. p. 90 *supra*), and it is primarily with churchyard yews that we are concerned. Hence it is proposed that the measurement should be taken at the base, and also at a height of three feet from the ground. De Candolle recommended a height of two feet for exogenous trees. Those who have had practical experience in measuring yews, will, while employing the tape at both these levels, recognize that there must be a slightly varied treatment for each individual tree. Perhaps, like Sir R. Christison[2], the investigator will be impelled, where the trunk is short, to take the girth at the narrowest part.

Unfortunately few actual records have been kept of measurements of yew trees taken at intervals. One or two cases may, however, be instructive. At Hurstbourne Tarrant, near Andover (Hants), there are two churchyard yews, which, the parish register informs us, were planted in 1693 and 1743 respectively. Now, if we accept Dr Lowe's mean rate of one foot for 65 years, the first tree, when re-measured in 1896, should have been about 9′ 10″ in

[1] *Life of Sir R. Christison* (edited by his sons), 1886, II. p. 254.

[2] *Life of Sir R. Christison*, *loc. cit.*

circumference, and the second 7′ 6″. The actual measurements were[1]:

1st tree. 8′ 4″ at base; 6′ 8″ at a height of five feet.
2nd „ 7′ 3″ „ „ ; 7′ 3″ „ „ „ „

Hence Dr Lowe's rate of growth would be too high for these trees; in the first example, markedly, yet the trees were still only of moderate age, and growth must have been active.

Other good records refer to two yews in the churchyard of Basildon, Berkshire. Details of the measurement of the first tree were entered in the parish register in 1780, and of the second in 1834, though both trees had been planted by Lord Fane at a considerably earlier date than the year 1780. In 1889 the trees were again measured by Mr Walter Money, and the results thus compared[2]:

1st tree. From 1780—1889, an increase from 6′ 3″ to 9′ 10″; a gain of 3′ 7″.
2nd „ From 1834—1889, an increase from 9′ 2½″ to 9′ 6″; a gain of 3½″.

Now, if it be true, as Dr Lowe's rule supposes, that a mean period of 65 years represents a gain of one foot in diameter, the first tree should have increased 5′ 3″ in circumference, and the second 2′ 8″. But here, again, the postulated rate of growth is far too high; in the second example, nine times too high. Even if we grant that "old trees grow, at intervals, much more rapidly than young ones," Dr Lowe's main rule is not verified. For it happens that measurements of the first tree were made at two intermediate dates, 1796 and 1834. During the first period, 1780—1796, the increase was indeed three times as great as Dr Lowe's formula would demand, but in the second, and longer period, 1796—1889, the growth was less than a quarter of the estimated amount. These measurements of yews, dealing with odd inches, truly suggest some degree of error, due to the substitution of one observer for another, nevertheless, we may assume the figures to be roughly correct. At the same time, these rather surprising results indicate the wisdom of calling in the aid of the

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., X. p. 431.
[2] *Antiquary*, XX. 1889, pp. 219–20.

total ring-estimate as a supplementary witness, since the increase of girth tends to be so variable.

Particulars respecting the growth of yews at Wrexham, as given by John Timbs, also show that an increase of one foot in 65 years is somewhat over the limit[1]. More records are desirable, yet the facts generally seem to favour Dr Lowe's higher limit of 70 years for each foot of growth, or even the 75 years proposed by the Christisons. On the whole, Dr Lowe himself seems to sanction the last-named estimate, for, while he thinks that one foot in 75 years is "below the average rate of growth," yet for purposes of calculation he prefers to adopt that scale[2].

The basis of 75 years, then, shall be taken in the present chapter. Two reservations, dependent upon what has been said previously, must, however, be borne in mind. First, seeing that young trees have, proportionately, a more extended leaf surface than old ones, larger rings are formed and the 75-years rule will make the trees too old. Secondly, and more important, there seems to come a period when aged trees are practically at a standstill; they make no more increase, but linger until disease and decay set in and slowly drain off the vitality. Of the yew at Aldworth, Berkshire, it is asserted that it has not increased in circumference since 1760[3]. I feel sure that this arrest, though not usually absolute, is very common; hence, for aged trees, additions to the age must be made after applying the 75-years rule. Much stress should be laid on this point.

This slightly technical review has brought us so far as this: there was a certain proneness among earlier observers to overestimate the age of the yew, and it is only as a result of modern observation that the tendency has been checked. Whoever has walked along the Pilgrims' Way of the Southern counties, and has stopped to pass his tape-measure around the oldest yews, must have realized that popular notions concerning the age of these trees are not justified. Elsewhere, I have attempted to show that many of these yews are successors of earlier ones, and

[1] J. Timbs, *Things not generally known*, new edition, p. 96.
[2] *Yew-Trees*, pp. 64–5. [3] *Antiquary*, XX. pp. 219–20.

that they were designedly preserved by pilgrims and other wayfarers[1]. That explanation embraces the spirit of the folk-tales which point to existing yew-trees as ante-dating particular Norman or Saxon churches. The traditions cover the fact that trees have studded the Pilgrims' Way for many centuries—a conclusion differing from the reckless guesses of guide-book antiquaries respecting the vast age of individual existing yews.

In some few instances, as we shall see, churchyard yews are extremely ancient, and it is a sound hypothesis that a replacement of dead yews has often been made, thus bridging over the period which has elapsed from the introduction of Christianity and the rearing of churches to the present day. But, in general, deductions drawn from the age of existing buildings are faulty. A caution must also be entered against over-estimating the age of particular trees in yew groves which are known to be ancient. Popular tradition says that the yews in Kingly Bottom, or Vale, near Chichester, existed when the sea-kings landed. The legend may be doubted, yet if we were to express it as Dr Lowe suggests —"yews were there" at that date—the statement would probably be accurate. Presented in this form, we may fairly assume the statement true for earlier periods. Doubtless the Neolithic flint-workers of the Vale, of whose old mines large numbers were discovered in 1910, looked upon a dusky yew grove as they went to their labours. Once more: in spite of the oft-repeated assertion that this or that yew is alluded to in Domesday Book, it is none the less a fact that no individual yew, no individual tree, in short, is mentioned therein[2].

From a long descriptive list of aged yew trees, slowly accumulated in a note-book, a few examples only need be extracted. At the head, in regard to antiquity, stands probably the yew in the graveyard of Fortingal (Fortingale, or erroneously, Fotheringhall), Perthshire. Sir R. Christison estimated this tree to be 3000 years old, and deemed it "the most venerable specimen of living European vegetation[3]." De Candolle's determination was about the same as Christison's. The hollow

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 353–7.

[2] Dr J. Horace Round, in a letter to the author, Nov. 9, 1906.

[3] *Life of Sir R. Christison*, II. p. 264. *Physiologie Végétale*, t. II. p. 1002.

stump, which has been carefully railed in, is now the merest wreckage. The Fortingal yew was measured by Daines Barrington in 1769, when the circumference was set down as 52 feet[1]. Pennant, a few years later, gave the result as 56½ feet, so that, reckoning on the 75-year basis, the tree would at that date be about 1340 years old. Mr C. T. Ramage, basing his calculations on the observed rate of growth of a yew in Montgomeryshire, arrived at the total of 1400 years[2]. It is worthy of notice that a very old ecclesiastical establishment once existed near the Fortingal yew[3]. Loudon gives us a woodcut representing the tree as it appeared in 1837[4]; beyond this we have to rely on the figures quoted, and on oral tradition.

Competing with the Fortingal yew for the premier position, there formerly existed that of Brabourne, in Kent. It was alluded to by Evelyn in his *Discourse on Forest Trees* (1664), as already "supperannuated," and it disappeared about a century ago[5]. De Candolle put its age at more than 3000 years[6], and while this was doubtless an over-estimate, yet, if the recorded circumference, 59 feet[7], be correctly stated, the tree was actually more ancient than its Scottish rival.

A third claimant, from Hensor (Bucks), must be introduced with a wavering pen. Its circumference, according to Mr J. R. Jackson, of Kew, was 81 feet[8], hence, if this measurement be accurate, the yews already mentioned are hopelessly out-ranged, for here we should have a tree 2000 years old. Unfortunately, this yew no longer remains to tell its own story, or to allow the measurement to be checked.

The celebrated churchyard yew of Darley Dale, Derbyshire, has suffered much in reputation owing to travellers' tales. Half a century since its diameter was approximately 9½ feet[9], its age may therefore be roughly estimated as 760—770 years.

[1] *Philosoph. Trans.* 1770, LIX. p. 37.
[2] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., V. p. 376. *Naturalists' Jour.* 1896, p. 99.
[3] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., V. p. 477.
[4] J. C. Loudon, *Arboretum Britannicum*, IV. p. 2079.
[5] Murray, *Handbook for Kent*, 5th edition, 1892, p. 37.
[6] *Physiologie Végétale*, t. II. p. 1002.
[7] *Handbook for Kent*, l.c., Black's *Kent*, p. 143.
[8] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., V. p. 376. [9] *Things not generally known*, pp. 96–7.

A dead yew, under-propped, and chained together so as to preserve the upright position, stands in the grounds of Kersal Cell, Lancashire. This cell was founded about the middle of the twelfth century, and Mr Arthur Mayall has suggested that the seed from which the yew sprang was brought from the Holy Land at the close of the Second Crusade (1149)[1].

The yews known as the "Seven Sisters," which grew on a knoll near the mill at Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire, but of which only two remain, have been deemed by an able, though anonymous, authority to be "most certain relics" of the mid-twelfth century[2]. The Abbey was founded in A.D. 1135. For the sake of comparison, De Candolle's figures—1280 years[3]—although too high, may be noted.

The Buckland yew, near Dover, which was removed from the churchyard in 1880, was one of those erroneously reputed to have been mentioned in Domesday Book. Serious historians, however, like Hasted, do not make this mistake. The tree was of vast size, though details are now lacking. At Watcombe, a lonely farm on the roadside between Wantage and Hungerford, stands a cluster of aged yews, possibly coeval with the Benedictine cell and church which were built there at the close of the eleventh century. The trees form a kind of covered way or cloister and now surround a central pond[4]. Of "Talbot's yew," in Tankersley Park, Yorkshire, it is said that a man on horseback could turn round inside its hollow trunk[5], and similar stories are related of other yew trees.

Our catalogue might be extended, but there is scant space to describe the yew of South Hayling (Hants), 33 feet round at its narrowest girth[6]; that of Tisbury (Wilts.), 37 feet[7]; of Crowhurst (Surrey) (Fig. 72), nearly 32¾ feet at a yard from the ground[8]; or of its namesake, the Sussex Crowhurst, 27 feet[9]. The Chipstead yew, in Surrey (Fig. 73), and the two yews of Mells, in

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XI. p. 334.
[2] Murray, *Handbook for Yorkshire*, 1874, p. 289; cf. 3rd edition, 1882.
[3] *Physiologie Végétale*, t. II. p. 1001.
[4] *Antiquary*, XX. pp. 219–20.
[5] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., XI. p. 162.
[6] *Science Gossip*, XXIV. p. 24.
[7] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., V. p. 376.
[8] Murray, *Handbook for Surrey*, 5th edition, 1898, p. 67.
[9] Murray, *Handbook for Sussex*, 5th edition, 1893, p. 16.

Somerset, one of which is shown in Fig. 74, are also well-grown trees. Hambledon, in Surrey, possesses two good examples; the larger is seen in Fig. 75. A mere glimpse only can be taken of the Swallowfield yew, Berkshire, believed by Kingsley to be older than the parish church (built A.D. 1286)[1]; of Evelyn's specimen at Scottshall (Kent), which he said was eighteen of his paces "in compasse[2]"; the huge monarch of Twyford churchyard, Hampshire; and the memorable, oft-described yew of Gilbert White's village of Selborne[3].

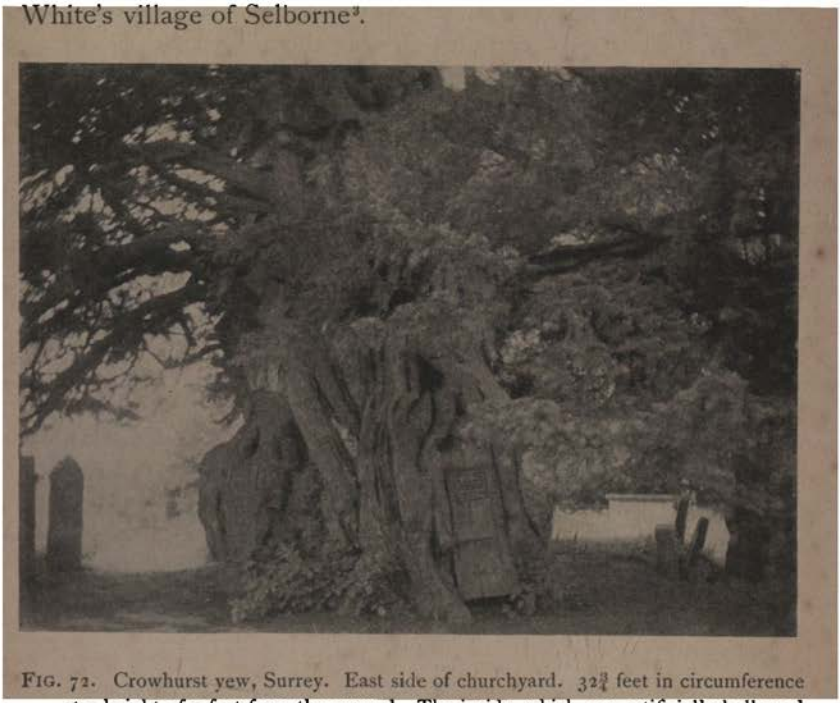

FIG. 72. Crowhurst yew, Surrey. East side of churchyard. 32¾ feet in circumference at a height of 3 feet from the ground. The inside, which was artificially hollowed in the year 1820, contains a table, around which a dozen persons can be seated.

Before taking final leave of individual trees, an example given by Strutt claims passing notice. Strutt cites an original charter which refers to the building of a church at Pérone, or Péronne, in Picardy, in A.D. 684. In this charter, a remarkable clause was

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., V. p. 154.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XII. p. 495.

[3] G. White, *Selborne*, Harting's edition, 1880, p. 420. See also E. A. Martin, *Bibliography of Gilbert White*, 1897, p. 219.

inserted, giving instructions for the preservation of a particular yew tree. The writer adds that the tree was in existence in A.D. 1799[1]. If we could be sure that the charter referred to the identical tree which survived till the latter date, we should here have a rival to the veterans of Fortingal and Brabourne.

FIG. 73. Yew on North side of Chipstead church, Surrey. Circumference at 4 feet from the ground: 25 feet. The blocked-up doorway is Transitional Norman (c. A.D. 1175); the arch is round, but is ornamented with the "dog-tooth." The Northern position of the yew was probably determined by the Northern approach to the church.

It has now been made clear that neither the exaggerated estimates of the earlier school of botanists, nor the under-calculations of recent writers, are quite satisfactory, and that, as of old

[1] J. G. Strutt, *Sylva Britannica*, 1822, p. 1.

the middle path is safest. We next ask how the yew came to be planted in churchyards. One section of antiquaries teaches that the object was to ensure a supply of evergreens for great festivals, and to furnish, in particular, "palms" for the procession on Palm Sunday (the second Sunday in Lent). That the "yew, or palm," served this purpose is abundantly proved by entries in churchwardens' accounts, and by the actual evidence of living eye-witnesses. Nor is it entirely a valid objection that box,

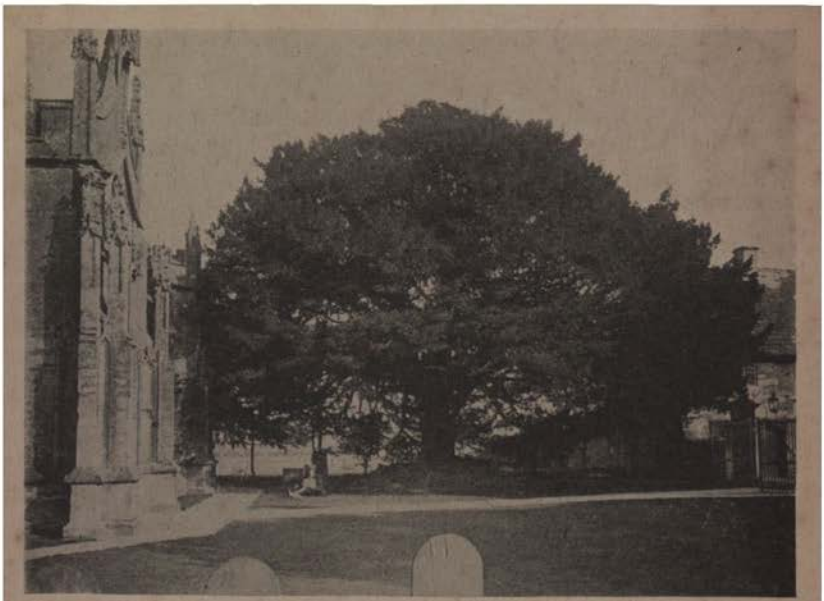

FIG. 74. Yew, Mells churchyard, Somerset. Girth, at a height of 3 feet from the ground, 11 ft 8 in. A slightly smaller tree stands a little towards the East, both specimens being situated on the South side.

laurel, broom and willow, have been or are still used for a like purpose[1]. It is on record, too, that twigs of yew were employed by the priests for sprinkling the Holy Water, in the Asperges, before Mass[2]. This class of evidence can be extended. The *Liber Festivalis*, or "Directory for keeping the Festivals," an old

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., VIII. pp. 346, 447. *Handbook to English Ecclesiology* (*Ecclesiol. Soc.*), 1847, p. 190. Brand, *Pop. Antiq.*, II. pp. 255–266 (whole question discussed). H. Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, 1892, II. pp. 586–9.

[2] Boulger, *Familiar Trees*, II. p. 60.

black-letter volume dated 1483, states that yew is carried about on Palm Sunday, "for encheson (= cause)[1] that we have none olyve that berith greene leef algate (= always)[2]." Irish peasants were wont to carry sprays of yew in their caps during Passion Week, and to place small portions beside the crucifix at the head

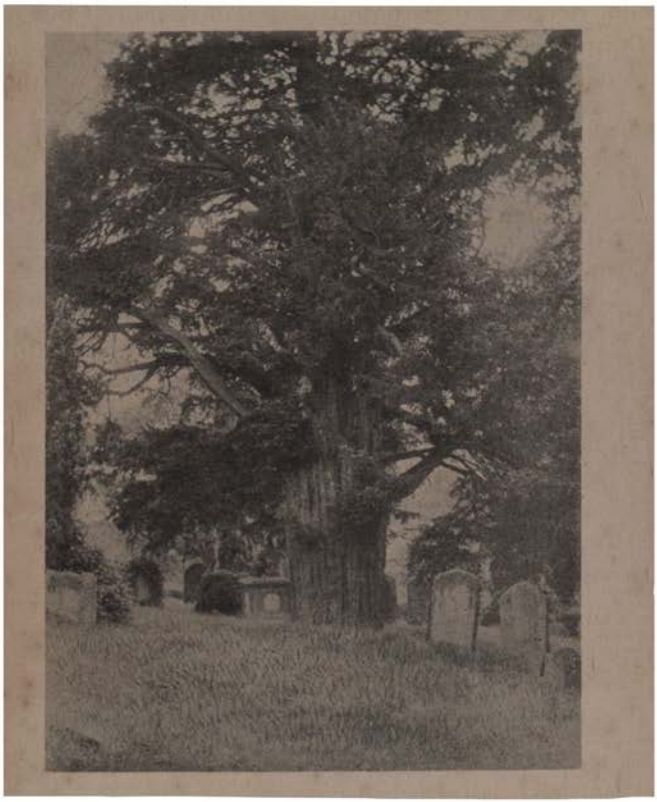

FIG. 75. Yew, Hambledon churchyard, Surrey. Circumference, at 3 feet from the ground, 29 feet; at 4 feet from the ground, 30 feet.

of the bed[3]. On St Martin's Hill, near Marlborough, as previously noted (p. 194 *supra*), there is an ancient earthwork, to which, so recently as 1858, a band of villagers went in procession on Palm

[1] F. H. Stratmann, *Middle-English Dict.*, ed. H. Bradley, 1891, p. 194.

[2] W. Caxton, *Liber Festivalis*, 1483, *Dominica in ramis palmarum*, sig. g (no pagination).

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., v. pp. 391–2.

Sunday, carrying boughs of hazel, not of yew[1]. Although the yew was absent, the ceremony supplies an interesting link, and the connection of a Christian festival with prehistoric remains seems to indicate an early origin of the custom. Again, a well-known ecclesiastical ceremony consisted in the solemn blessing by the priest, on Palm Sunday, of branches of yew and box, which were then burnt to ashes, and these were preserved for use on the Ash Wednesday of the following year[2]. When visiting Wookey, in Somerset, during the summer of 1906, I was told that the old churchyard cross, recently restored, was known as "Yew Cross," because it was formerly decorated with yew on Palm Sunday. It is an astonishing fact, moreover, that in the North-West Himalayas the yew is not only an object of veneration, but its twigs are carried in processions and incense is made of its timber[3]. The enthusiastic antiquary might rashly adduce this as a proof of the Asiatic origin of the "Aryans," let us rather suppose, without prejudicing that vexed question, that it is another instance of similarity of custom developing independently among diverse races.

Plainly, then, we have obtained at least a partial answer to our question. Further usages, of a somewhat kindred nature, suggest reasons for the presence of the tree in the churchyard. Yew branches were carried by mourners at funerals; sprigs of yew were scattered on the coffin; corpses were even rubbed with an infusion of the leaves, with a view to preservation[4]. Dryden speaks of the "mourner yew"; in *Twelfth Night* the clown sings of "My shroud of white, stuck all with yew[5]"; allusions are also found in the works of Dekker (1603), Thomas Stanley (1651), and other seventeenth century writers. The association of the yew with funerals survived until our day[6]. Sir Thomas Browne, discussing, with sonorous eloquence, the burials of the ancient

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., v. p. 447.

[2] J. Brady, *Clavis Calendaria*, 1812, 1. pp. 276–80.

[3] *Yew-Trees*, p. 98, cf. *Folk-Lore*, XIII. p. 201.

[4] *Fam. Trees*, p. 61. [5] *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. Sc. 4.

[6] Concerning the use of the yew at funerals, see Brand, *Pop. Antiq.*, II. p. 312; Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 56; *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., IV. p. 532. The purely literary references might be greatly extended; consult, e.g., Lowe, *Yew-Trees, passim*, also T. N. Brushfield, in *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*, ed. W. Andrews, 1897, pp. 256–78.

Greeks and Romans, tells us that "the funeral pyre consisted of sweet fuel, cypress, fir, larix, yew, and trees perpetually verdant," and continues, later, "whether the planting of yew in churchyards hold not its original from ancient funeral rites, or as an emblem of resurrection, from its perpetual verdure, may also admit conjecture[1]."

Turning to a more prosaic theory, we find it urged that yew-trees were planted in churchyards to protect the fabric from high storms and to shelter the assembling congregation before the doors were opened. The chief basis for this opinion is discoverable in the notable statute of which the date is believed to be 35 Edward I. (A.D. 1307): *Ne rector prosternat arbores in cemiterio*, that is, the rector must not cut down trees in the churchyard, save, as the act proceeds to specify, for the repair of the chancel[2]. The statute was a repetition of a decree of the Synod of Exeter (A.D. 1287), which forbade the felling of churchyard trees, and expressly stated that they are often planted to prevent injury to the building during storms[3]. A like prohibition, it is asserted, though mistakenly, had been earlier embodied in Magna Charta[4]. It is more pertinent to the present inquiry to remark that the law is still binding. A foreign writer, whose name I cannot ascertain, is quoted as stating that the yew was planted for shade and *conciones* (= assemblies)[5]. With reference to the above-mentioned decrees, it is argued that the yew would be the principal, if not the only, kind of tree which needed preservation. If, then, with Gilbert White[6], we adopt the shelter theory as one explanation of the presence of the yew, we tacitly admit that the tree, to have been of any service, must have been planted long anterior to the date of the statutes. Was the yew, it will reasonably be asked, well adapted for a

[1] Sir T. Browne, *Hydriotaphia*, ed. S. Wilkins, 1884, III. p. 25.

[2] Sir R. Phillimore, *Eccles. Law*, 2nd edition, 1895, p. 1407. Brand, *Pop. Antiq.*, II. p. 256. G. White, *Selborne*, p. 421. *Statutes of the Realm*, 1810, I. p. 221. The date of the Act said to be uncertain.

[3] *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, p. 54. C. G. Prideaux, *Prac. Guide to the Duties of Churchwardens*, ed. F. C. Mackarness, 1895, p. 331. H. W. Cripps, *Laws relating to the Church and Clergy*, 1886, pp. 433-4.

[4] *Yew-Trees*, p. 101. The error was apparently due to a misunderstanding of the reference in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, 1849, II. p. 256 n.

[5] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XII. p. 113. [6] G. White, *Selborne*, pp. 421-2.

screen or shelter? On the one hand, Dr Lowe urges, as objections, the tree's slow growth and the horizontal habit of its branches. Against this opinion we may set the more plausible view of Daines Barrington, that the thick foliage of the yew renders it better for the purpose than other trees[1]. While not admitting that the shelter theory accounts for the original intention of the earliest planters, it seems obvious that even one yew would be effective in breaking the force of the wind from a particular quarter. Moreover, two or three trees were often grown in the churchyard. Slowness in reaching maturity would not be an absolute bar, if, indeed, the tree were not already well advanced in growth ere the church fabric was actually reared. As a matter of history, a case cited by Barrington shows that the felling of yews caused the roof of the church to suffer.

Other trees besides the yew would, without doubt, be also employed; whether this was the case in primitive times may, however, be questioned. The "rugged elm" of the *Elegy* would come into favour in due course. Examples of magnificent elms are to be seen at North Mimms (Herts), Iford (Sussex), East Bedfont (Middlesex), and in many Essex villages. Alfriston, in Sussex, has an immense elm, hollow with age. Somewhat later, the sycamore, as at Plumpton (Sussex), and the horse chestnut, as at Thursley (Surrey), were also utilized. This brings us probably to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though the precise dates are usually not ascertainable. Cedars occasionally replace the yew[2], for example, in the churchyard of Lullingstone (Kent), or they supplement it, as at Ashtead (Surrey). Rodmell, in Sussex has a magnificent holm oak, besides a large horse-chestnut and numerous elms. Walnuts are not uncommon; Mitcham and Great Bookham (Surrey), Clee and Great Coates (Lincs.), furnish good examples. Boldre churchyard (Hants) contains a maple which was considered by Gilpin and Strutt to be the largest in England. A huge ash borders the Eastern yard at Westmeston (Sussex), but the ash, especially the "weeping" variety, is a feature of churchyards in

[1] Daines Barrington, *Observations on the more ancient Statutes*, 1785, p. 191. See also J. Vaughan, *Lighter Studies of a Country Rector*, 1909, ch. xii. pp. 121–8.

[2] Cedars and cypresses are common in Sussex churchyards.

the Northern counties. "They, too, had once their office, they handed on the fire." Of these miscellaneous trees I have compiled, from observation, a goodly list, but always one meets the yew, either sporadically, or in each successive churchyard. Whatever may have been the case with our indigenous trees, such as the oak, and beech, or the common elm—a tree now acknowledged to be endemic—at the date referred to in the ordinances for protection, we do know that the yew then existed as a churchyard tree. Its most common position—on the South side of the building—is also that which is exposed to the prevailing winds and rainstorms.

A very popular theory, and one which merits close examination, is that yews were grown in the churchyard so as to ensure a ready supply of material for the manufacture of bows. Even should anyone audaciously deny that the yew is poisonous, he cannot dispute the existence of an old-standing belief to that effect. A tree dangerous to cattle, it was therefore argued, must be grown in an enclosed area. In Mediaeval times, though perhaps not so commonly in the early Saxon period, such a space was already furnished by the conveniently fenced churchyard. While we cannot allow the claim that the fact of the tree's being poisonous will account for the felling of yew groves, while, rather, we must believe that the needs of archery would demand the actual plantation of thickets and woodlands, there is no reason for doubting that, where an additional tree was preserved for the village bowyers, the husbandman would desire to have it railed in. The yew groves, at least those artificially planted, would usually have their own fences, and would be inaccessible to cattle. Partly, the bow theory goes against the shelter theory, since constant lopping would impair the tree's usefulness as a curtain. The bow theory, however, is not quite inconsistent with the employment of sprays of the tree on festal occasions.

To review briefly the subject of British archery let us start fairly at the Norman Conquest. It is known that the Normans were acquainted with the cross-bow[1] or arbalest (prob. from *arcus* = a bow; *ballista* = a military engine: the later spelling

[1] *Yew-Trees*, pp. 131–2.

"arrowblest" is discredited), a somewhat complicated weapon, having a handle or stock, to which was attached a bowstave of yew or steel (Figs. 76, 77). The cross-bow was drawn by means

FIG. 76. Shooting birds with the cross-bow. From a 14th century MS. (Strutt.)

FIG. 77. Shooting at the butts, with the cross-bow. 16th century. (Strutt.)

of a stirrup fixed at the end of the stock, or it was slowly and laboriously wound up by cords and windlass, and then drawn by means of a lever. Besides this cumbrous weapon, the Normans, as we learn from the Bayeux "tapestry," were accustomed to use the simpler long-bow[1], a plain arched weapon—a "self" bow made of a single yew stave. These bows were employed at the Battle of Hastings, and some writers have hastily assumed that the long-bow "came over with the Conqueror." This conclusion cannot be accepted in silence.

Able authorities state that the long-bow (Figs. 78, 79) was peculiarly the weapon of Northern races in general[2]. The Danes and the Saxons used it in warfare[3], and it is noteworthy that we inherit the Anglo-Saxon words, *boga*, *boge* (bow), and *arwe*

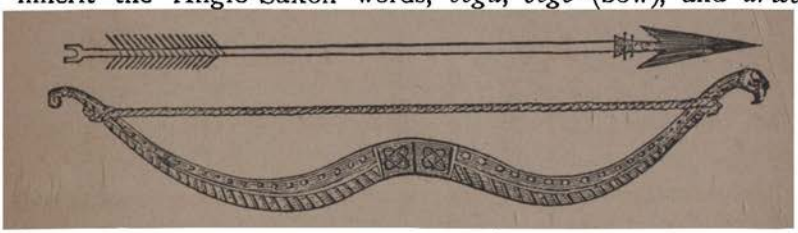

FIG. 78. Saxon bow and arrow; an elaborate specimen. From a 10th century MS., in the Cotton Library. (Strutt.)

(arrow), the last term having been in use so early as A.D. 835[4]. There is also evidence, based on examples of decorative ornament and on runes, that archery was practised in England about the year A.D. 750. By some authorities the Romans are supposed to have introduced the bow, presumably the cross-bow, which is really a kind of portable ballista, into the country[5]. Sir John Evans, while admitting that the cross-bow was in use during the Roman period, believes that it was not known in the Neolithic

[1] *Yew-Trees*, pp. 112–113. C. J. Longman and H. Walrond, *Archery* (Badminton Library), 1894, p. 28.

[2] *Archery*, p. 28. G. A. Hansard, *Book of Archery*, 1840, pp. 226–7.

[3] *Archery*, p. 103. *Ency. Brit.*, 11th edition, under *Archery*. J. Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1801), Bk II. chap. i., gives several facts to prove that the Saxons were acquainted with the bow and arrow. For a more guarded view, see Baron J. de Baye, *Industrial Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, trans. T. B. Harbottle, 1893, pp. 30–1.

[4] *New Oxford Dict.*, under "Bow" and "Arrow."

[5] *Ency. Brit.*, l.c.

Age, when long-bows made of yew were probably employed[1]. Between these two periods vast centuries roll, and we may fairly assume that the cross-bow does not belong to pre-Roman Britain. But what impresses us is the conviction that the plain long-bow had never been entirely superseded. A yew bow, made of indifferent material, consisting of a single stave about five feet long, was dug out of deep peat near Cambridge in 1885, and was judged to be prehistoric[2]. Switzerland has also yielded a few specimens, but bows of undoubted Neolithic Age are rare.

FIG. 79. Saxon archers, with long-bows. From an 8th century MS. in the Cotton Library. (After Strutt.)

Reasoning from the unnumbered arrowheads of stone which have come down to us and which are now preserved in collections, we may infer that the long-bow was in common use during the Later Stone Age, even supposing that many "arrow-heads' were really tips for shafts thrown by hand. We may peer yet further into a darker past, when, as Pitt-Rivers suggests, primeval

[1] Sir J. Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, 2nd edition, 1897, p. 411.

[2] *Archery*, p. 16.

man fastened his lance to the stem of a young forest tree, which he improvised as a spring-trap or an elastic throwing stick[1].

This slight digression carries us thus far: the cross-bow may possibly reach back to the Roman period, but the long-bow is certainly of prehistoric origin. These conclusions have some bearing on the artificial planting of yews, and are important to the upholders of the "bow theory." It may be advisable, too, to notice the discovery of a spearhead of yew in the peat of the Fenland[2].

Now we may return to the Norman Conquest, and the Norman cross-bow. To wind up and discharge this weapon was obviously a difficult and tardy process. For every bolt shot by the cross-bowman, the archer could deliver six arrows[3]. Mr C. F. Longman and Col. H. Walrond consider this ratio much too favourable to the clumsier engine[4]. Be that as it may, the long-bow, swift and deadly, won for us Creçy and Poitiers. Aided by their field entrenchments, the English were able to give the national arm free scope, and the "quarrels" discharged by the Genoese cross-bowmen were more than answered by the English arrows[5]. The scene makes us remember Gilpin's apposite observation, that the Frenchman drew a bow, while the English bent a bow. For, in England, the cross-bow had given the first place to its lightsome competitor in the thirteenth century[6]. But the bolt and cross-bow lingered for two more centuries, until the long-bow itself was struggling for supremacy with the hand-gun or hand-cannon, which had been introduced about the year A.D. 1446. A statute, passed in A.D. 1515, increased the property qualification for using a cross-bow or

[1] *Archery*, pp. 10–11. For a full account of the construction and distribution of the different kinds of bows, see H. Balfour, in *Jour. Anthrop. Inst.* XIX. 1889, pp. 220–254. See also Gen. A. Pitt-Rivers, *Evolution of Culture*, ed. J. L. Myres, 1906, pp. 45–184. A useful, concise account of the bow is contained in Dr H. S. Harrison's *Handbook to the Weapons of War and the Chase* (Horniman Museum), 1908, pp. 39–43.

[2] *Yew-Trees*, p. 110. Sir John Evans possessed a flint flake, hafted in yew wood, which was found at Nussdorf, in Switzerland (see *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 292).

[3] *Archery*, p. 115. [4] *Ibid.* p. 115.

[5] *Archery*, pp. 109–10. *Yew-Trees*, pp. 131–2. Daines Barrington, in *Archaeologia*, 1785, VII. pp. 46–48.

[6] Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, Art. "Archery."

hand-gun to 300 marks a year, and this sum was again raised a few years later. At the same time the use of the long-bow was enforced[1].

We will now deal exclusively with the long-bow. Statutes relating to archery are very numerous, and range from the time of Edward I. to that of Charles II., during whose reign the long-bow practically died out as a weapon, in spite of many patriotic attempts at resuscitation. Very pleasant reading is afforded by some of these old ordinances. The first statute, 13 Edward I. (A.D. 1285), known as the Statute of Winchester, ordered all males of a certain rank to shoot from the age of seven, and this act was not repealed until A.D. 1557. Statutes passed during the reign of Edward III. commanded that bows and arrows should be provided by the local authorities, and archery should be encouraged. Under Richard II. all servants were to practise at the target, and Sunday was specially nominated for the purpose. Henry IV. (A.D. 1405) regulated the manufacture of arrow-heads, which were to have a steel point, and to bear the mark of the maker. Most important legislation was passed under 5 Edward IV. c. 4 (Irish Statutes): "Every Englishman, and every Irishman dwelling with Englishmen, shall have a bow of his own height." Later, came laws regulating the importation of bowstaves. Here it should be explained that the timber of the yew, dense and elastic, was considered to form the ideal raw material, but modern bowyers have largely abandoned "self-yew" bows, and seem to prefer a combination of two kinds of wood, yew for the inner, and hickory for the outer layer. Since English yew was inferior to that of Spain, Portugal and Italy, because it suffered from an excess of "pins" —spots from which branches had been trimmed (Fig. 70, p. 367 *supra*)—importation was necessary. First, then, bowstaves were ordered to be brought over with other merchandise, and marked accordingly. Next, they were to be imported with every butt of wine. The price was fixed, and soon the scale of charges became complicated. In A.D. 1504, good bowstaves were admitted free of duty. And so the story might be continued. There are commands to practise the sport on feast-days, and on every

[1] *Archery*, p. 141.

possible occasion ; the quality of the bowstaves and arrows is to be improved; butts are to be erected or repaired. Entries under this last head are found in parish accounts extending well into the seventeenth century. The churchwardens' accounts of Ashburton (Devon) for instance, refer (A.D. 1558–9) to "lopping the yew-tree" and to payments "to the Bowyer." So late as A.D. 1772, several thousand bowstaves came to England, chiefly from the Baltic ports and from Rhineland[1].

Seeing then, that the making of bows and arrows was, for many centuries, a leading industry both in England and on the Continent, we are led to ask to what extent Sir A. Conan Doyle's lines express historical facts, since they are obviously not correct as they stand.

"What of the bow?
The bow was made in England:
Of true wood, of yew-wood,
The wood of English bows.
So men who are free
Love the old yew-tree
And the land where the yew-tree grows[2]."

In the first place, it is abundantly clear that yew was the material most sought after. Roger Ascham says that yew was best for "parfite shootyng," and that "Brasell (a hard, red, dye-wood), Elme, Wych, and Asshe" were "meane for bowes[3]." Now the importation of foreign yew was rendered necessary, as already noticed, because the native material was not the most suitable. More than this, the supply of yew, even with the addition of cargoes from abroad, was insufficient. Thus, in 1541, to give one instance only, it was enacted that the bowyer should make four common bows of "elme, wych, brasil, ashe," or other wood, for one of yew. Near London, the proportion might be reduced—two bows of common wood to one of yew[4]. Our

[1] The authorities for the facts given in this paragraph are very numerous. Most important is *Archery* (Badminton Series), especially chs. vii. and ix. The bibliography given on pp. 472–499 is exhaustive, and a concise list of the statutes is presented on pp. 500–1. See also F. Grose, *Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons*, 1786, pp. 37–8. *Ency. Brit.*, Art. *Archery*; J. Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1801), ed. J. C. Cox, 1903, Book ii.

[2] Sir A. C. Doyle, *The Song of the Bowmen.*

[3] R. Ascham, *Toxophilus*, 1545, Arber's reprint, p. 113.

[4] *Archery*, p. 144.

English yew was so knotty, that, as Brady sadly remarks, it was "used for bows of boys, and other weak shooters[1]." While a bow made of the best foreign yew was to be sold for 6*s.* 8*d.*, a bow of English yew was assessed at a value of 2*s.* only. The main point to be noticed here is that, as an historical fact, English yew was employed, at any rate, in part. And Warner, a writer of the late eighteenth century, asserts that among the "lower ranks" there was, in his time, a tradition that the churchyard yew was the source of bowstaves[2]. Apart from the churchyard tree, there were other supplies. A general plantation of yews, we are informed, was specifically commanded in 1483[3]; Strutt cites the remarkable yew wood on the isle of Inchconak-head, Loch Lomond, as a probable result of such afforestation[4]. General Pitt-Rivers suggested a like date and origin for the yews of Cranborne Chase, and it is possible that several ancient copses of yew were much extended in area about this time. In the reign of Elizabeth—so we are told, but I doubt whether the assertion can be upheld—yews were actually ordered to be planted in churchyards[5]. It is also stated that Charles VII. of France (A.D. 1422–1461) commanded that the tree should be grown in all the churchyards of Normandy expressly to provide wood for cross-bows[6]. Incidentally, we observe that the yew was employed in making both kinds of bow. Connecting these facts with the practice of archery on the village green, and with the ordinances for the repair of the parish butts, it is a fair supposition that the churchyard yew served, though perhaps as a secondary purpose of its existence, the demands of the local bowyers.

Several objections have been raised against this last-named theory. The inferiority of English yew has been mentioned;

[1] J. Brady, *Clavis Calendaria*, 1812, I. p. 257.

[2] R. Warner, *Collections for a History of Hampshire*, 1795, I. p. 104.

[3] *Yew-Trees*, p. 103. Hansard, *Book of Archery*, p. 330. I cannot find any such legislation mentioned in *Statutes of the Realm*. The statement seems to be copied from Strutt (W. J.).

[4] J. G. Strutt, *Sylva Britannica*, 1826, p. 28. Mr W. Adamson Foulis informs me that the island referred to must be Inchlonaig (=Yew Island).

[5] *Yew-Trees*, p. 103. Cf. J. G. Strutt, *Sylva Brit.*, 1826, p. 4, where the same statement is made.

[6] *Yew-Trees*, p. 155.

in the face of a constant lack in the supply of yew, the objection is not weighty. Then it is pointed out that the English churchyard seldom contains more than one full-grown yew, and as a final word, Hansard affirms that "Every yew-tree growing within the united churchyards of England and Wales, admitting that they could have been renewed five times in the course of a century, would not have produced one-fiftieth of the bows required for military supplies[1]." This is a hard saying. But, in fact, churchyards sometimes have two or three yews, and probably, as Dr Lowe hints, there may formerly have been more, though few have survived the severe periodical loppings. Again, it is not claimed that the churchyard stock of timber was more than supplementary and subsidiary. The yew avenues and yew groves of many a nobleman's estate would give toll. To argue that the churchyard yew could not have been pruned to make bows because that supply was insufficient, would be as erroneous as if the future historian were to assert that English wheat could not have been used for bread in the year 1911, because five out of six loaves were obtained from external sources. And, as we have already seen, the plain facts prove that the combined native and Continental stores of yew were so inadequate that the laws compelled the substitution of other kinds of timber in fixed proportions.

This deficiency of raw material has led some writers to raise the question whether the artificial scarcity did not render the planting of yew trees in graveyards a strict necessity[2]. Hansard himself admits that the inferiority of English yew has been too much insisted on[3]. His other statement—that Henry IV. forbade the royal bowyer, Nicholas Frost, to trespass for wood on the estates of any religious order[4]—does not finally dispose of the claim of churchyard trees, though, in its own connections, the fact has some importance. A wary controversialist, with a position to defend, might urge that the injunction implies a former practice which was now, after this order, to be discontinued.

[1] *Book of Archery*, p. 330. Cf. T. S. Knowlson, *Origins of Pop. Superstitions and Customs*, 1910, pp. 222–5. (General question discussed.)

[2] R. Warner, *Collections for a History of Hampshire*, 1795, I. p. 105 n.

[3] *Book of Archery*, p. 332. [4] *Ibid.* p. 329.

Here we are concerned, however, to test fairly all the theories. Without wresting the evidence, there seems good ground for believing that the churchyard yew supplied its quota of bowstaves to the village, and that this may have possibly been the case even in the pre-Conquest period. Not for a moment, however, do I believe that the needs of archery explain the primary purpose of the first planters.

A faint side-light on the general subject of the utilization of churchyard trees comes from Rodmell, in Sussex. During the sixteenth century the rearing of silkworms was one of the industries of this village, and a portion of the necessary supply of mulberry leaves was obtained from trees grown in the churchyard. It is stated that specimens of the trees were still standing in the eighteenth century.

From interpretations based on social economy, to those which make ornament the primary purpose of the churchyard yew, the leap is not great, since the latter idea, after running parallel with, may have been ultimately superseded by the former. Thus, the churchwardens' accounts of Bridgenorth (Salop) record the planting of a yew-tree "for reverence sake[1]." Again, Giraldus de Barri, commonly called Giraldus Cambrensis, who visited Ireland about the year A.D. 1184, observed the yew in burial grounds and holy places. His words are: "*Prae terris autem omnibus, quas intravimus, longe copiosus amara hic succo taxus abundat, maxime vero in coemiteriis antiquis, locisque sacris, sanctorum virorum manibus olim plantatas,* [al. *plantatis*] *et decorum et ornamentum* [al. *ornatum*] *quem addere poterant, arborum istarum copiam videas*[2]." The style of Giraldus is not beyond criticism, but his meaning is quite clear: "In this country more than any other which I have visited, yew-trees, having a bitter sap, abound, but you will see them principally in ancient cemeteries and sacred places, where they were formerly planted by the hands of holy men, to give what ornament and beauty

[1] *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 263.

[2] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topog. Hiberniae*, dist. III. c. 10, p. 739 in Camden's edition, 1602. Cf. D. Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, ed. G. W. Hart and H. Frere, 1903, II. pp. 262–3.

they could[1]." While offering this as an explanation of the original intention, Giraldus informs us, in another part of his work, that, when Henry II. made his expedition to Ireland, his archers went to Finglas, about two miles from Dublin, and sacrilegiously laid violent hands on a beautiful group of yews, in a most irreverent and atrocious manner ("*enormiter et irreverenter desaevire coeperunt*")[2]. This took place, it will be noted, but a few years before the Welsh antiquary's own visit to Ireland, as secretary to Prince John (A.D. 1185). Incidentally, we may glance at a curious suggestion made by Mr C. I. Elton. Referring to the reputed introduction of hive-bees to Ireland by St Dominic of Ossory, Mr Elton supposes that there could have been little bee-culture until the yews had largely disappeared, for the tree is prejudicial to this industry[3]. One would like to hear the opinion of bee-keepers on this question; so far, one's own inquiries have been fruitless.

From the idea of ornament we turn to the motive force of superstition. The most curious example of this folly is given in a fantastic description by Robert Turner, a seventeenth century writer on botany. The passage merits full quotation. The yew was planted "commonly on the West side [this is an error, W. J.] because those places being fuller of putrefaction and gross oleaginous vapours exhaled out of the graves by the setting sun, and sometimes drawn into those Meteors called Ignes fatui, divers have been frightened, supposing some dead bodies to walk, others have been blasted, not that it is able to drive away Devils, as some superstitious Monks have imagined; nor yet that it was ever used to sprinkle Holy Water, as some quarrelsome Presbyters, altogether ignorant of natural Causes, as the signification of Emblems and useful Ornaments, have fondly conceived." The writer further admits that the yew is poisonous; "yet the growing of it in the Church-yard is useful, and therefore it ought

[1] Cf. Translation by T. Forester, in T. Wright's edition of *Topog. Hiber.*, 1887, p. 125; also J. F. Dimock's edition of Giraldus's works, 1867, v. pp. 135, 280.

[2] *Topog. Hiber.* dist. II. c. 54. Camden's edition, p. 734; Wright's edition, p. 109.

[3] Elton, *Origins*, p. 221 n. Some species of rhododendrons and azaleas are said to be productive of poisonous honey. (F. R. Cheshire, *Bees and Bee-keeping*, 1886, p. 291.) Laurel and ivy, though probably agreeable to bees, are similarly sources of bad honey. (A. Neighbour, *The Apiary*, 1878, pp. 297–8.)

not to be cut down upon what pittiful pretence soever[1]." Turner's lofty disdain of "superstitious Monks" and "quarrelsome Presbyters," coupled with his own ideas of "natural causes," is very diverting, but discounts his claim to accuracy. Yet we notice that, while pressing his own interpretation, he alludes to others which were probably current in his day. We should remember, moreover, that Turner wrote nearly two and a half centuries ago, and that he was, to this extent, nearer the origin of the custom. Consequently, he may have caught the record of genuine folk-memory, though that might have already become confused.

In opposition to Turner's scepticism about the power of the yew to banish devils, was the popular belief that the tree protects the graveyard from witches[2]. Henderson says that the yew was indeed "a very upas tree to witches," and that this accounts for its proximity to the church[3]. Another writer, Mr W. G. Black, in an excellent paper, takes a contrary view. Witchcraft was ever most powerful when it exercised its mysterious influences through instruments usually connected with the Church. Hence the value of divination by church key and a book of Psalms; hence charms by coffin-rings and churchyard grass (cf. pp. 164, 302 *supra*). The yew was actually helpful to witches because it grew near the church[4]. To harmonize these conflicting superstitions is unnecessary, yet they might perhaps be traced along converging lines to a common source. From religious consecration to sorcery is a short journey for the ignorant. Besides this, the antiquary is thoroughly accustomed to what one may call the "contradiction of localities"; the yew may have been a guardian against witches in one village, while in the next village the "midnight hag" used it as a spell. Superstitions and customs cannot be adequately represented in a unilinear series. The tree of descent throws out branches which lie in many planes, and the terminal points may often be opposed to one another.

[1] R. Turner, *Botanologia*, 1664, pp. 362–3.

[2] Tyack, *Lore and Legend*, p. 77.

[3] W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of Northern Counties*, 1879, p. 226.

[4] W. G. Black, in *Antiquary*, VI. 1882, pp. 12–15. Among the Anglo-Saxons, it was customary to consecrate charms by bringing them in contact with the church. See *Jour. Amer. Folk-Lore*, XXII. 1909, p. 153.

It chances that a passage in *Macbeth*, easily glided over unthinkingly, bears upon this subject of the yew's uncanny properties: "Slips of yew, sliver'd in the moon's eclipse[1]." (*Sliver*, diminutive of Earlier Mod. Eng. *slive*, a variant of *slip* = to cut off[2].) The allusion to the balefulness of the eclipse arouses no special comment. The "fatal and perfidious barque" which proved so unfriendly to Lycidas was "built in th' eclipse[3]." The Venerable Bede found it necessary to forbid Christians to practise witchery by the moon. The Chinese believe that the eclipsed sun or moon is being devoured by a dragon, and the Hindoos attempt to ward off the ill-effects of an eclipse by breaking earthenware vessels and casting out the food contained therein[4]. It was natural, then, that eclipses represented times of foreboding and of mysterious rites. But why employ a "sliver" of yew? The answer is probably supplied by Sclavonic folk-lore. The devil, or storm-spirit, claims the yew as his own. To use a beam of this tree, or even a branch broken off by the wind, that is, a picked-up portion, was unlucky. The devil would haunt the house of the sorcerer to regain his own. The witch, therefore, employs a mere insignificant slip, useless either to woodman or demon[5]. Or was it that the three hags, being in league with the Evil One, might lawfully use his instruments?

In German folk-lore, there was a belief that the wood of the yew, ground to powder, made into paste, and baked in an oven, was a sovereign remedy against the bite of a mad dog[6]. Alternatively, a die was made of yew and letters and signs were cut in the block. Cakes stamped with this charm (*Toll-holz*) were given to the mad animal. These instances show that the yew, while feared as of ill-omen, brought its measure of luck to him who could obtain and use it aright.

The foregoing beliefs seem to form part of a tangled skein, which, if temporarily dropped, must be picked up again shortly. In the interval, material of a like nature may be examined.

The dense, heavy tree, "standing single in the midst of its

[1] *Macbeth*, Act. iv. Sc. 1. [2] *Cent. Dict.*, s.v. [3] Milton, *Lycidas*, ll. 100–1.
[4] M. D. Conway, *Demonology and Devil-lore*, 1879, I. pp. 44–45.
[5] W. G. Black. *l.c.*
[6] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XII. p. 191; *Folk-Lore*, XIII. p. 96.

own darkness," has been considered a just emblem of sin, death, and mortality. Being, perhaps, our most deadly indigenous tree, it materializes the adverse spirit of evil and destruction[1]. In partial conflict with this idea, the vitality of the tree, its longevity, its durable timber, and its evergreen leaves, have suggested to some minds the Resurrection and the eternal life. This latter fancy may have been strengthened by the sight of young shoots springing out of the old, apparently dead, wood, even from a decaying stump, or a bole entirely hollow, and charred perchance by fire. Whether these symbolisms are altogether adventitious and derivative, and whether they can be quite reconciled, are difficult questions. The ideas have a Mediaeval tinge, but none the less they may be relics of an older mysticism.

The inquiry may be pushed back further, because there are a few miscellaneous fragments of evidence to be collected. Dr Daniel Rock, whose volumes show wide research and carefulness in sifting ecclesiological details, casts aside the bow theory, and proceeds to say that many of our yews were planted by Anglo-Saxons, and not a few by British Christians. The hardy evergreen yew is the analogue of the cypress of hotter climes. The converted Britons, he believes, "often, if not always, sought to build their churches near to some fine yew-tree—even then, maybe, a few hundred years old[2]." Dr Rock gives the grand yew of Aldworth, Berkshire, as an example of this early planting, but we can scarcely accept his opinion. Although, by actual measurement, it was found, as already mentioned, that this tree has not increased in girth since the year 1760, yet this girth is but 27 feet, and will not satisfy the claim of so great an antiquity. Undoubtedly the yew-tree was reverenced in the early times. Two churches, alluded to by an ancient Welsh bard, were renowned for their prodigious trees: the minsters of Esgor and Heûllan, "of celebrity for sheltering yews[3]." Boswell Syme, the authority for this statement, adds that Heûllan signifies an old grove. We read, too, of consecrated yews. In the old Welsh

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., VIII. p. 244.

[2] Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*, II. pp. 262–3.

[3] J. T. B. Syme and J. E. Sowerby, *Eng. Bot.*, VIII. p. 281.

laws, a consecrated yew was assessed at £1, a specimen of ordinary yew at 15 pence only. With these prices we may compare those of a mistletoe branch and an oak branch, which were threescore pence and sixscore pence respectively[1].

In the North of Scotland the yew was credited with a peculiar property. A branch of graveyard yew would enable one chief to denounce another, in such a manner that, while the clansmen standing by could hear the threats, the intended victim could not hear a word[2].

Accumulated testimony shows that the yew was an object of veneration in pre-Christian times. Mr H. C. Coote has dragged forth evidence on this subject, as on many kindred questions, which had previously lain unnoticed. "But of these old-world superstitions," he writes, "that connected with the yew-tree is the most interesting. For, as of old, it was associated with the passage of the soul to its new abode,—so ever since the introduction of Christianity into this country it has continued to adorn the last resting place of the body which the soul had left[3]." He then quotes the poet Statius, who flourished about A.D. 81: "*Necdum illum* [i.e. Amphiaraum] *aut trunca lustraverat obvia taxa Eumenis*[4]," that is, Amphiaraus had descended into Hades so quickly that the Eumenides, or Furies, had no time to purify him by a touch of the holy yew branch[5]. The Furies are also fabled to have made torches of yew[6]. In connection with the superstition mentioned by Statius, a discovery described by Wright is of interest. In a Roman cinerary urn there was found a dark incrustation of vegetable matter, believed to be caused by the decay of a branch of yew[7].

Since, then, the yew called forth tributary respect in pagan times, we are led nearer the centre of mystery, and the Cimmerian shades close in rapidly. Can we be sure of the primary cause of the veneration? The tree has been popularly associated with that much misunderstood priestly caste, which embraced the

[1] W. H. Ablett, *Eng. Trees*, 1880, p. 154.
[2] *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., II. pp. 184–5.
[3] C. H. Coote, *The Romans of Britain*, 1878, p. 427.
[4] Statius, *Thebaïd*, VIII. vv. 9, 10.
[5] Cf. Coote, p. 427.
[6] *Notes and Queries*, 5th Ser., XII. p. 8.
[7] T. Wright, *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon*, 1861, p. 328.

Druids of classical writers. Dr Lowe contends that there is no evidence to show that the Britons held the yew in reverence; to disprove the notion, he adds, "I have been unable to discover a single instance of a Druidical stone being associated with a Christian church[1]." If, as is fairly evident, "Druidical stone" is to be interpreted as "prehistoric megalith," a reference to Chapter I. will show that such cases were probably not uncommon. Concerning the Druids and their sacred trees our direct knowledge is scanty, but absence of allusions to the yew in connection with Druidical rites is not completely conclusive against the ceremonial virtues of the tree. Besides, there are some half hints which are not quite negligible.

To speak of the worship of sacred trees would carry us far from our bearings. Those who desire to study this subject would do well to read Professor J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough*, and the famous seventh chapter of Mr Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God*. From these writers we learn not only the significance of tree-worship and tree-spirits, but we understand the inspiring motive of ceremonial tree-planting. The first trees which grew on barrows may have become rooted there by accident, such as the chance visits of birds, or the scraping together of the material of the mound. The trees would receive the more encouragement from the fact that the soil had been turned over and laboured. Again, is it too fanciful to suggest that a sacred grave-stake, freshly trimmed, might occasionally put forth leaves and take root? Whatever the origin of the practice, direct planting, with a fixed purpose, would eventually come into vogue. Shrubs, especially evergreens, would be placed on the graves of dead tribesmen (cf. p. 323 *supra*). Like practices have been recorded the world over. Greeks, Arabs, Etruscans, Phoenicians, Hindoos, Chinese, and various American peoples furnish examples. A survival is seen in the English custom of thrusting slips of bay and yew into the green turf of Christian graves[2].

[1] *Yew-Trees*, p. 101.

[2] Brand, *Pop. Antiquities*, II. p. 312; Hansard, *Archery*, p. 331. Pepys mentions a churchyard near Southampton where the graves were "sowed with sage" (*Diary*, ed. Richard, Lord Braybrooke, 1887, p. 98).

Frequently the round or Bronze Age barrows of the South of England are topped by the Scotch pine, a tree which is not indigenous to that region. In Southern Europe the cypress is the favoured evergreen of tombs and cemeteries, but in Italy and Provence the holm-oak is equally a conventional graveyard tree. In Northern Europe it is the yew which receives the place of honour[1]. Branches of cypress and yew were employed in ancient Greece and Rome as signals that a household was in mourning[2]. No great stress can be laid on the passage from Macpherson's *Ossian*, "The yew was a funereal tree, the companion of the grave among the Celtic tribes. Here rests their dust, Cuthullen! These lonely yews sprang from their tomb and shaded them from the storm[3]." Without daring to re-open the *Ossian* controversy, one may, however, hazard the opinion that the passage enshrines a genuine tradition.

At Knowlton, Dorset, as stated on p. 13 *supra*, the church, which is now utterly ruined, and which is of Norman, or, as some have supposed, perhaps even Saxon foundation, stood within a round British earthwork, one of a small group. The earthworks, which were first carefully described by Warne, are themselves now nearly obliterated, but a group of storm-swept yews, it will be recollected, marks the site[4]. It is perhaps justifiable to suppose that our early ancestors, like the churchmen of Mediaeval days, replaced dead or uprooted yews by fresh saplings. The group of yews at Kingly Vale, to which we have already paid some attention, stands in the neighbourhood of four barrows, and numerous excavations, probably prehistoric, dot the turfy slopes of the hillside.

Folk-lore lends a little help in attaching the yew to prehistoric observances. Sir John Rhŷs relates a story of an Irish hero, who, by the aid of his druid or magician, defied the fairies, dug into the heart of their underground home, and recovered his

[1] G. Allen, *Evolution of the Idea of God* (R. P. A. edition, 1903), p. 55.

[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, LI. p. 10.

[3] J. Macpherson, *Poems of Ossian*, 8th edition, I. p. 240, quoted by Lowe and others. (I cannot discover the passage. W. J.)

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., IX. p. 77; *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. Soc.*, XVII. 1896, pp. 135, 138–140. The earthworks are described by A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England*, 1908, pp. 564, 566.

lost wife. To accomplish this, the druid used "powerful ogams" written on rods of yew[1]. O'Curry records a saga wherein the druids employ divination wands made of yew[2]. Sir G. L. Gomme thinks that the change from oak or mistletoe to yew was the result of Christian influence, and that Druidism continued to exist long after it was officially dead[3]. This may be so, but, theory for theory, there is a little more reason for supposing that the early Church diplomatically accepted a settled custom. Moreover, though the yew was planted in the graveyard, and though it was pressed into service on Palm Sunday, it is only in modern times that its branches have been admitted into the sacred building as a portion of the Christmas decorations. Even to-day an East Anglian superstition says that if anyone accidentally brings yew into the house along with the other Christmas evergreens, a death will occur in his family within a twelvemonth[4]. This refusal of a place of honour during the great period of joyousness and festivity seems to indicate that the tree was originally adopted by the Christians, not from choice, but from policy; in other words, a pagan emblem was adopted, but not unreservedly. Yew twigs were appropriate only to the more solemn services of the Church. Again, the branches were doubtless proper decorations for a maypole, as one may learn to-day from outlying districts like the Aland Isles; but for centuries the yew was not recognized at the great Christian anniversary.

In a legend related to the king of Tara by Finntann, the cultivator and craftsman of the yew, it is said that the first household vessels were made of the timber of this tree[5]. In the British Museum, London, as well as in the Science and Art Museum of Dublin, many early implements made of yew are exhibited. Ossian speaks of the war chariot thus: "Of polished

[1] Sir J. Rhŷs, *Celtic Folklore*, 1891, II. p. 424.

[2] E. O'Curry, *Manners and Customs of the Irish*, 1873, II. pp. 193–4. Cf. J. B. Bury, *Life of St Patrick*, 1905, p. 76.

[3] Gomme, *Ethnology in Folklore*, p. 60.

[4] R. Forby, *Vocab. of East Anglia*, 1830, I. p. 413.

[5] *Manners and Customs of the Irish*, l.c. Buckets made of yew have been discovered in Anglo-Saxon graves at Linton Heath (Cambs.) and Roundway Down (Wilts.). *ndus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 102. Cf. *Folk-Lore*, XIII. p. 96.

yew is its beam; its seat of the smoothest bone." This tradition may point to a former abundance of the tree, or it may denote a slackening of ceremonial, followed by the employment of yew wood for economic purposes.

There remain a few more "half-hints." The Fortingal yew (p. 375 *supra*) had its career shortened by the lighting of Beltane fires against its trunk[1]. The origin of Beltane fires is on all hands admitted to be at least pre-Roman. Another illuminating fact is that when this aged tree had become separated into two portions, funeral processions were accustomed to pass between the limbs[2].

Readers of Scott will remember that in the *Lady of the Lake* (canto iii., st. 8), the fiery cross by which clansmen were gathered to battle was made of yew, and we may assume that the poet had heard of the mystical associations of the tree. The lines run thus:

> "A slender crosslet formed with care,
> A cubit's length in measure due:
> The shaft and limbs were rods of yew."

We return for a moment to the question of the association of yews with ancient remains. Professor H. Conwenz, at the meeting of the British Association in 1901, asserted that there exist some hundreds of place-names in England, Scotland and Ireland, connected with the word "yew." Ireland was especially rich in this respect, and in some of the Irish localities fossil yew had been found. The statement, if verifiable, is of deep interest, but our English philologists, up to the present, do not seem to have dealt with this series of place-names. Near the churchyard yew of Darley Dale are traces of British dwellings[3]. The Cranborne Chase yew grove is not far from the camp at Winkelbury, nor from the Romano-British villages of Woodcuts and Rotherly. Our churchyards, as shown in Chapters I. and II., are sometimes in close proximity to prehistoric antiquities. The allusion to assemblies—"conciones"—around the yew-tree (p. 383 *supra*) may carry us back to Saxon or even early British

[1] *Naturalists' Journal*, 1895, p. 99.

[2] *Nat. Jour.*, l.c.; J. G. Strutt, *Sylva Britannica*, 1826, p. 28. Strutt gives a fine illustration of the Fortingal yew.

[3] Murray, *Handbook for Derbyshire*, 3rd edition, 1892, p. 30.

customs. At least one example of such ancient usage has been brought to light by Sir G. L. Gomme. It refers to the market and fair of Langsett, Yorkshire, which, together with the manorial court, were held under an old yew. During the eighteenth century, when the tree still flourished, tradition said that the meetings went back to time immemorial[1]. Within these last sixty years, again, a yearly fair or wake was held on Palm Sunday—a noteworthy date—under the boughs of the old Surrey yew in Crowhurst churchyard[2] (Fig. 72, p. 378).

One further problem remains to be noticed. Why is the yew, in a majority of instances, placed on the South side of the churchyard, or, failing the South, why on the West? For it is manifest to the careful observer that the North side is little favoured, and the East even less. In discussing the folk-lore of the cardinal points we saw that parishioners formerly shunned the North side of "God's Acre," and craved burial in the Southern or Western portions. The roots of this preference spread wide and deep, but even superficially there were reasons good enough. On the South side stood usually the churchyard cross (p. 328 *supra*). The main door and the entrance gate commonly faced the noonday sun. In Saxon times, when, as Dr Rock remarks, the simple building had often only one door, this door looked to the South[3]. Clearly this quarter was popular. Originally, man would be guided in his selection by considerations of physical warmth; respect for solar influences on animated nature may have followed. Based on these feelings, ideas of sentiment, and later, of reverence, would be kindled in the minds of the worshippers.

For many years I have been collecting details concerning the position of yews in churchyards. Turning to the county of Surrey, I find well-grown yews tabulated for 41 churchyards—the list is not quite exhaustive. Of course, many churches lack the attendant yew. To simplify the question, we will imagine a median line passing East and West through the church, and prolonged through the churchyard. Trees standing South-East

[1] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Primitive Folk-Moots*, 1880, p. 133.
[2] Murray, *Handbook for Surrey*, 5th edition, 1898, p. 67.
[3] *Church of Our Fathers*, p. 178.

and South-West may for our present purpose be considered to be on the South side; the North-East and North-West corners are similarly reckoned as North. There remain the yews which occur roughly on the median line—East or West. On this basis, five Surrey yews were noted as being on the North side, and only six on the West. One only is recorded as standing due East. The remainder are situated due South or at intermediate positions in the sun's track. Partial explanations may frequently be offered. In one case of a Western yew, there is a doorway at the West end only; in another, the tree is rather young, and is a doubtful claimant to be catalogued. Again, at Chipstead (Fig. 73, p. 379), a noble yew on the North overshadows a blocked-up Northern door of Transitional Norman date, so that formerly the villagers passed this tree as they entered the edifice. Still again, one North yew is perhaps accounted for by the fact that the Southern yard is a mere strip, though, to present the case fully, we must note that occasionally one finds a North yew where the Southern burial ground is spacious, and the Northern actually narrow and stinted.

In order to form a just opinion on the subject of the yew's position, we ought to ascertain the earliest plan of the church and the original extent of the burial-ground. It would then, I think, be discovered that the space most used for interments, and the porch or door through which the worshippers generally entered the building, correspond, in the vast majority of cases, with the position of the sentinel yew. Which is cause, and which is effect, may be an open question. Did the yew obtain its place—generally, as we have seen, with the South aspect—because of the superstitious notions already given, and were the graves afterwards made in a cluster around it? Or did the accumulating burials on a particular side call forth a desire for a funereal emblem, a "warder of these buried bones," as Tennyson sang? Again, did the yew precede the church, or the church the yew, or were they co-eval? Probably no single solution is the true one. Surveying the whole field, I think that the planting of the yew was generally an after-event, because a preference for interment on the sunny side goes back to pre-Christian times, and because the yew is not a universal

feature in churchyards. In some few cases the building and the tree are apparently of equal age; in other instances, the church may have been built, one imagines, adjacent to an already existing tree.

The Surrey statistics are borne out by those of Hampshire. Out of twenty-one ancient yews which I have scheduled for that county, five only stand on the North side, two on the West, and one on the East. If a complete list were obtainable, it might tell a similar story. Here, as in dealing with Surrey, should two yews be present, the classification considers the older and more important tree; should there be more than two, the positions of the majority of old trees are taken. It frequently happens that there are several young trees, in those cases what may be called a "foundation yew" often dominates the graveyard. Two Easterly yews and one Northerly are alone recorded for those positions in Middlesex; two Northerly for Berkshire, and similarly for other counties, though in no county is the list at all complete. Again, out of nineteen Normandy villages with churchyard yews, the figures were: thirteen yews on the South, five West, one North, and none East. Hence, the preference is French as well as British. In districts where chalk and limestone are absent, the yew is comparatively scarce. On the Boulder Clay of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and, in fact, over the North of England as a whole, the ash, elm, and horse chestnut are the most usual trees. Frequently they are supplemented by a few pyramidal Irish yews of no great age.

A rapid co-ordination of details may now be given. The yew appears to have been held in superstitious respect during the Bronze Age[1], and it is possible, in the preceding Neolithic

[1] I have not yet observed a yew growing on a British burial mound, but Gen. A. Pitt-Rivers, in describing a British barrow which he opened on Winkelbury Hill, seems to supply an instance. He states that he found no relics within the mound, and that this absence was probably due to a dead yew, locally called a "scrag," which he removed. Gen. Pitt-Rivers calls the yew an "insertion," but was the tree "inserted" alive or dead? A dead yew would scarcely work much havoc. He continues—and the addition is noteworthy—"I afterwards learnt that the people of the neighbourhood attached some interest to it, and it has since been replaced by Sir Thomas Grove." (*Excav. in Cranborne Chase*, II. 1888, p. 258.) Cf. *Folk-Lore*, XIII. p. 96; Prof. H. Conwenz, in *Brit. Assoc. Report*, 1901, p. 839.

period. The Romans and Greeks favoured the tree for its funereal symbolism. The earliest Christians in Britain seem to have adopted the yew as a sacred emblem, occasionally, perhaps, building their churches by its side; and, reverencing it because of its hallowed associations, they employed it for certain gloomy ceremonies. Early Mediaeval symbolists saw in the tree a type alike of death and of resurrection, and the yew actually obtained a position in ritual, and prestige in the Church Calendar. Much later, it crept into the Christmas decorations. Meanwhile, in harmony with the Mediaeval practice of combining the secular and religious life of the community, the yew seems to have been in some instances a trysting-place for open-air assemblies. It sheltered the church fabric from storms, and, at a time when "England was but a fling, But for the eugh and the grey goose wing," it lent its aid in protecting the country itself. The "sad, unsociable plant" most likely increased numerically—in churchyards, in avenues, and on upland wastes where it had flourished in Pleistocene times but had afterwards disappeared. History tells little of all these incidents, but in the minds of most men, ignorant or learned, there is an instinctive feeling, not dissonant with reasonable probability, that this mysterious, old-world tree derives its dignity and expressiveness from the customs of ages exceedingly remote. Well might Mr William Watson, sitting—not indeed, under some aged tree in a sequestered graveyard, but beneath the shade of the monarch yew near Newlands Corner, in Surrey—sing of the exceeding longevity of these sentinels, which guard their secrets with such jealousy:

"Old emperor yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings,—
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dusk of alien things?
What mighty news hath stormed thy shade,
Of armies perished, realms unmade[1]?"

[1] W. Watson, *The Father of the Forest*, v. 1.

CHAPTER X

THE CULT OF THE HORSE

IT is probable that the story of the horse fascinates more diverse groups of students than does that of any other domestic animal. Truly, too, has it been said, though with a touch of cynicism, that association with this creature will draw out all that is knavish in man, just as it will encourage acts of the finest heroism. But whether the cynic or the idealist be right, or each partly right, there can be no denial of the leading place taken by the horse in the history of man's conquest of Nature or in the decisive battles which have determined the supremacy of nations.

To the expert palaeontologist, who prepares the way for the patient workers in zoology and folk-lore, the descent of the horse is attractive because it illustrates, with great beauty and precision, the modern doctrine of development. From an examination of many collections of bones, derived both from the Old and the New Worlds, Huxley and Marsh constructed a general pedigree, of which the details, as discoveries have gradually accumulated, have been filled in by such workers as Sir E. Ray Lankester, Dr C. W. Andrews, Mr R. Lydekker, and Professor J. Cossar Ewart, in Britain, and, in the United States, by Professor R. S. Lull. We begin, far back in the lowest Eocene division of the Tertiary period, with a small hypothetical, or at least unidentified, plantigrade creature, perhaps no larger than a rabbit, with five digits on each of its fore and hind limbs. It would be difficult to produce a specimen of the exact ancestral animal which would satisfy all investigators, but its

former existence is doubted by few[1]. Still keeping to the Eocene formation, though mounting to a higher horizon—the London Clay—we come to *Hyracotherium*, which was an animal about the size of a hare or very small fox, and which fed on the soft, green vegetation around the margins of lakes and rivers[2]. *Hyracotherium* (Fig. 80) had four toes on its fore feet[3], with vestiges, or "rudiments," as they are unfortunately called, of a fifth. In *Palaeotherium* of the Upper Eocene, there are three toes only, but these are nearly equal in size[4]. (It may be well to recall the geological systems of the Tertiary period: they are, in ascending order, Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene.) In the Oligocene genus *Mesohippus*, of which the members were perhaps as large as a sheep, there is still a suggestion of a fourth toe in the fore foot[5], but the two side toes which are actually discernible do not themselves quite touch the ground. In *Hipparion* of the Miocene and Pliocene formations, the lateral toes, each terminated by hoofs, were still shorter; and the earlier *Anchitherium* was in much the same plight. Both the last-named animals are now deemed to be off the direct ancestral line of our present-day horses[6], but they may stand as early types. Indeed it is difficult to formulate a genealogy which is everywhere accepted. Chiefly owing to the migrations which must have occurred, no complete family tree can be prepared, and all attempts, while true as a whole, are only approximately correct as regards the detailed relationships. The general direction being clear, onward we go, passing creatures as large as a donkey, still preserving vestiges of the lateral toes, till at last we reach the horses of history. The horse which we know

[1] J. Cossar Ewart, in *Ency. of Agriculture*, ed. by C. E. Green and C. Young, 1908, II. p. 427. W. Watts, *Geology for Beginners*, 2nd edition, 1907, p. 300. H. A. Nicholson, *Manual of Palaeontology*, 1889, II. pp. 1360–3, claims *Phenacodus*, a fossil animal from the lowest Eocene of North America, as representing the five-toed ancestor of the horse. On the general question of ancestry, see p. 411 n. *infra*. An acute criticism of the modern theory is offered in J. Gerard's *The Old Riddle and the Newest Answer*, 5th edition, 1908, pp. 93–106.

[2] J. Cossar Ewart, *op. cit.* II. p. 426.

[3] W. Watts, *op. cit.* p. 300.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 300.

[5] R. Lydekker, *Guide to the Specimens of the Horse Family* (Brit. Mus.), 1907, p. 5.

[6] Lydekker, *loc. cit.* Ewart, *op. cit.* II. p. 428.

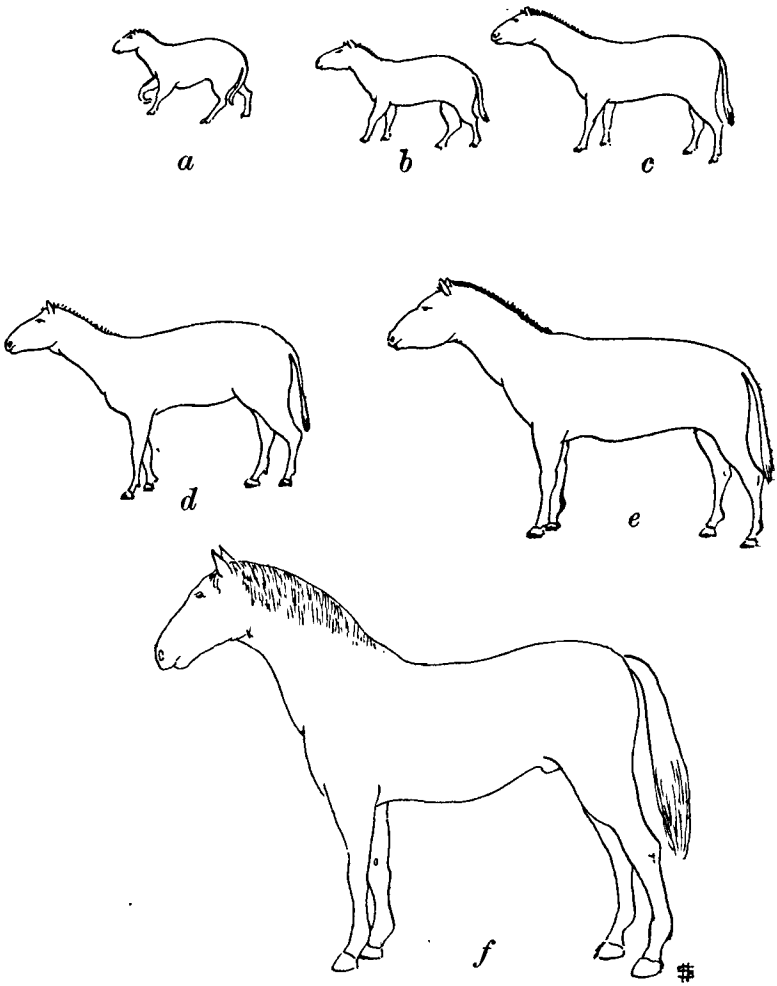

FIG. 80. The ancestors of the horse and its relatives: comparison of sizes and forms.

a. *Hyracotherium* (Lower Eocene deposits).

b. *Plagiolophus* (Middle Eocene).

c. *Mesohippus* (Oligocene).

d. *Merychippus* (Miocene).

e. *Pliohippus* (Pliocene).

f. Typical modern domesticated horse (*Equus caballus*).

From the *Amer. Jour. Science*, XXIII. p. 167; by the courtesy of Professor R. S. Lull.

has but one central, solid-nailed or hoofed toe, but it retains, hidden beneath the skin, traces of two side toes in the form of the "splint bones," as they are called by the anatomist and the veterinary surgeon.

Thus we see that the primitive creature, which throve on the lowlands and in the damp forests, was succeeded by representatives which had lost the divided hoof. We infer that a change of habitat had occurred: the cloven, spreading foot was no longer necessary. Accompanying this modification, great structural changes were developed in the teeth, suggesting that the animal had begun to feed on harder, drier herbage. There are other "decadent remnants" visible in the modern horse, such as the callosities, or "chestnuts," of the limbs, which are believed to have once been functional, possibly as scent-glands[1]. Viewed as a whole, the developed genus *Equus* is larger, swifter, and stronger than its ancestors, and it is proportionately more supple and graceful.

The story just outlined is not a whispering vision vouchsafed to a few favoured palaeontologists. Behind the theory there is reality, as may easily be proved by a study of authoritative works[2], or by an examination of the specimens in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington.

Our first intimation of human contact with the horse is furnished by the Solutrean and Magdalenian caves and rock-shelters of France. Representations of the animal, both on the flat and the round, are not uncommonly found associated with remains of the latter period. The cavern of Bruniquel, Tarn-et-Garonne (Magdalenian period), yielded sculptures of horses' heads, representing carved objects which were probably portions of javelin-throwers. A fragment of a horse's rib from the same

[1] *Guide...Horse Family*, pp. 8–9.

[2] The following authorities may also be consulted: W. Ridgeway, *The Origin and Influence of the Thoroughbred Horse*, 1905, pp. 1–12. E. Ray Lankester, *Extinct Animals*, 1905, pp. 134–42. C. W. Saleeby, *Organic Evolution*, 1905, pp. 56–64. R. Lydekker, in *Knowledge*, XXV. 1902, pp. 100–2, and N.S. III. 1906, pp. 472–4. *Guide to Fossil Mammals and Birds* (Nat. Hist. Mus., South Kensington), 8th edition, 1904, pp. 22–6. R. S. Lull, "Evolution of the Horse Family," in *Amer. Jour. Science*, 4th Ser., XXIII. pp. 161–82. *Quart. Jour. Geol. Soc.* LXV. 1909, pp. cxix–cxx, where there is an allusion to gaps in the pedigree.

site was engraved with three horses' heads[1]. From the cave-shelter of La Madelaine, Dordogne, there was obtained a bone incised with the figure of a naked man, on each side of which was a horse's head[2]. Other French examples might be given (Fig. 81 A). Only one English specimen is on record—a polished fragment of a rib, engraved with the head of a horse, found at Robin Hood's Cave, Cresswell Crags, Derbyshire[3] (Fig. 81 B).

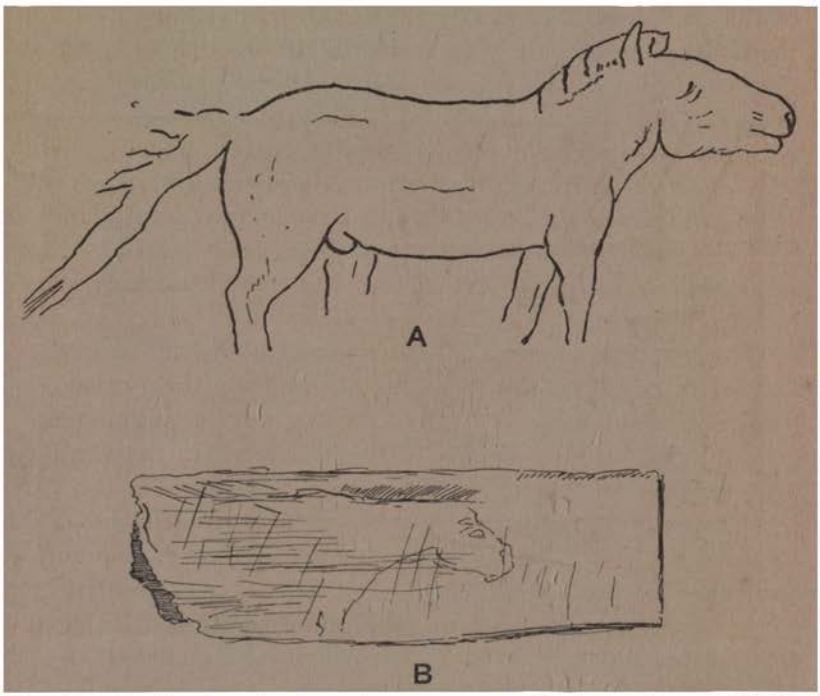

FIG. 81. A. Drawing of a horse, by a cave-man. Dordogne, France. (British Museum.) The large head and the upright mane are especially noticeable.

B. Horse's head, incised on a piece of bone; Limestone cave, Cresswell Crags, Derbyshire. (British Museum.)

[1] C. H. Read, *Guide to the Stone Age*, 1902, pp. 48, 49. Many representations of horses and horse-heads have been detected among the coloured drawings (ochre and black) on the walls of two Palaeolithic caves at Combarelles and Font-de-Gaune, explored in 1901. (See Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 85.)

[2] B. C. A. Windle, *Life in Early Britain*, 1897, pp. 28, 29. *Cavernes du Périgord*, by MM. E. Larty and H. Christy, 1864, should be specially consulted.

[3] *Guide to Stone Age*, p. 65. W. Boyd Dawkins, *Early Man in Britain*, 1880, p. 184.

From a casual inspection of these early and priceless works of art, we might conclude that the horse known to Palaeolithic man was of a stunted breed, small and heavy, with a large head, rounded forehead, short neck, and an upright or "hog mane." But this generalization would be lacking in precision. Professor Ewart has discriminated three types. The first type includes horses the features of which closely agree with those of the wild species (*Equus prejevalskii*) recently discovered in the Great Gobi Desert. (There is a wide diversity of usage in

FIG. 82. Prejevalski's (or the Mongolian) wild horse (*Equus prejevalskii*). This animal has a large head, a short upright mane, and relatively long ears. The body colour is yellow dun, merging into rufus brown. A narrow dark stripe runs down the back. The illustration may be compared with the cave-man's drawing (Fig. 81 A).

spelling the scientific name of this animal, as also the name of its Russian discoverer.) This horse, a specimen of which is to be seen in the Zoological Gardens, London (Fig. 82), resembles pre-eminently the Cave horse just described. The second type embraces animals which resemble the broad-browed ponies often met with in the Western Highlands of Scotland, while the third

type suggests the slender-limbed, narrow-headed ponies of Western and North-Western Europe[1].

Whether Palaeolithic man, even during the latest Cave Period, had begun to tame the horse, is a question which has been keenly debated. Bones found by M. É. Piette in the celebrated cave of Mas d'Azil, on the left bank of the Ariège, in Southern France, were incised with drawings of horses' heads. In one example there was a delineation of what are supposed to be halters, and in another, of some kind of trappings[2]. I believe that the nature of these ornaments is not widely disputed, so that the controversy turns upon their exact signification. The trappings have, indeed, been thought to represent a hunter's fur cloak, carelessly thrown over a subjugated horse; and again, with slightly more reason, it is urged that the "saddle" is imaginary, the lines being merely a conventional finish to the drawing, comparable to the marks on early pottery. Again, the use of anything of the nature of a saddle could scarcely appertain to the earliest stages of domestication. M. Zaborowski has conjectured that the supposed halters are really lassoes, and it has therefore been inferred that horses were kept semi-domesticated in a kind of compound, for purposes of food[3]. We may notice, as bearing on this contention, the description given by Herodotus respecting the Sagarthians, an ancient people allied to the Persians in speech and in dress. The Sagarthians were in the habit of capturing their foe—"be it man, or be it horse"—by the aid of lassoes terminating in nooses[4]. Canon Rawlinson tells us that this practice was common to many of the ancient nations of Western Asia[5]. As to the horse of the Cave Period, MM. Carl Vogt, Émile

[1] Ewart, in *Ency. of Agric.* II. p. 434. Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 82, claims two distinct species, "at least," of Palaeolithic horses.

[2] Ewart, *Trans. Highland and Agric. Soc. of Scotland*, 5th Ser., XVI. 1904, pp. 230–68. A. C. Haddon, *Nat. Home-Reading Union Mag.* (Gen. Course), XV. p. 114.

[3] T. Rice Holmes, *Anc. Brit. and the Invas. of Jul. Caes.*, 1907, p. 56 n.

[4] Herodotus, *History*, l. vii., c. 15.

[5] G. Rawlinson, translation of *Hist. of Herodotus*, 4th edition, 1880, IV. p. 72 n. Ridgeway, *op. cit.* pp. 23, 117, 130, 192, gives particulars of the use of the lasso by other peoples.

Cartailhac, and G. de Mortillet, consider that its domestication would be possible only by the help of the dog, the first animal to be tamed; and since remains of the dog are lacking at Palaeolithic stations, a presumably fatal objection is lodged[1]. This view is not, however, uniformly accepted. M. Julien Fraipont, for instance, grants that the drawings show that man had tamed the animals represented, but denies that this implies domestication. The creatures were probably captured young[2]. But is not this tantamount to an admission that the first step towards domestication had been taken?

Early man, as a modern humorist has remarked, would indeed at first take to his heels to avoid the heels of the early horse. But this fear did not last for ever. Palaeolithic man both hunted the animal and ate its flesh. At the rock-shelter of Solutré, Saône-et-Loire, there was discovered, around the primitive hearths, a veritable wall of horse bones, the relics of thousands of animals[3]. At La Laugerie, horses' teeth abounded[4]. At the rock-shelter of Cro-Magnon remains of the horse were predominant. It has been urged that these remains were not those of wild animals. Professor N. Joly supposes that the horse would be sheltered, and gradually brought to a less precarious condition of life. He also cites M. Toussaint, who boldly claims that the horse bones of Solutré are those of domesticated animals. Allowing for minor differences, it is submitted that the bones are quite similar to those of modern horses. The quantity of bones and the age of the horses which they represent—four, five, or six years—are deemed to indicate a domestic herd. The remains are assembled in one place, and it is therefore assumed that the horses were boiled, cut up, and eaten at that spot, just as would be the case with domesticated animals. Had the horses been hunted in a wild state, they would have been carried piecemeal from a distance, as is the

[1] A. Doigneau, *Nos Ancêtres Primitifs*, 1905, pp. 129–30. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 129–30.

[3] *Guide to Stone Age*, pp. 39–40. S. Baring-Gould, *Deserts of Southern France*, 1894, I. p. 151. Ridgeway, *op. cit.* pp. 83–4.

[4] Baring-Gould, *loc. cit.* The exploration of the Kesserloch cavern, at Thaingen, Baden, showed that the horse had been used for food in the Magdalenian period. See *Nature*, LXXIX. 1909, p. 343.

case with the earliest caves of the archaeolithic age[1]. These arguments are by no means without a flaw, but they carry some weight. And English opinion, so far as can be gathered, is rather in favour of the theory that the Palaeolithic cave-men had made tentative efforts in taming the horse. Our English authorities seem to lay more stress on the Mas d'Azil trappings than do their French brethren[2].

When we come to the Neolithic Age, we find an anomaly; the horse seems to be a much rarer animal than in the preceding period. Yet horses of a type closely resembling those of the Palaeolithic Age were probably domesticated in several parts of Europe[3]. Skulls obtained from Pleistocene deposits at Walthamstow, Essex, seem, on the one hand, to indicate a race allied to, if not identical with, the Solutrean cave-horse of the Mongolian type (*E. prejevalskii*)[4]. Horse remains however, from later superficial deposits, associated with Neolithic relics only, appear to be rare. Though found amid the ruins of Neolithic lake-dwellings in Switzerland, bones of the horse cannot be declared abundant, even at those stations. The British evidence is so unsatisfactory that some writers, like Lord Avebury, have doubted whether the horse was known in Britain during the Neolithic Age. Lord Avebury states that he knows of no well-authenticated instance of the occurrence of the horse in a long barrow. After analysing the records of excavations made by Greenwell and Bateman, he concludes that the horse bones tabulated by these investigators belong to the Bronze Age, or even to a later period[5]. Again, Professor Ridgeway,

[1] N. Joly, *Man before Metals*, 4th edition, 1887, p. 265 and note.

[2] Ewart, *Trans. Highland and Agric. Soc. of Scotland*, 5th Ser., XVI. pp. 237–42. For a contrary English view, see Ridgeway, *op. cit.* pp. 89–91.

[3] B. Tozer, *The Horse in History*, 1908, p. 4.

[4] *Guide to Horse Family*, p. 14. Mr R. Lydekker, in a letter to the author, dated Jan. 6, 1909, stated that little is known of the Walthamstow skull exhibited in the Zoological Department (S. Kensington). There are other horse skulls from Pleistocene river-gravels to be seen, however, in the Geological Department. Most of our bone-caves (e.g. Kent's Cavern, near Torquay) have yielded horse remains; and many specimens have been obtained from brick-earths and raised beaches. J. Cossar Ewart, *Trans. Highland and Agric. Soc. of Scotland*, 5th Ser., XVI. 1904, p. 233.

[5] Lord Avebury, *Pre-historic Times*, 6th edition, 1900, pp. 160–1.

after asserting that it is by no means clear that Neolithic man had tamed the horse, conjectures that the primeval horses had become extinct, and had been replaced by a re-introduced species only at the end of the Bronze, or the beginning of the Iron Age[1].

Against these conclusions may be set the opinion of Canon Greenwell: "I cannot understand how any one with the evidence properly before him can doubt that the goat, sheep, horse, and dog were, in the earliest Neolithic times, imported as domesticated animals into this country and into Switzerland[2]" —a notable statement. Since it is the horse alone with which we are now dealing, I select some of Canon Greenwell's examples of barrows which yielded bones of that animal. In a round barrow of the East Riding, two pelvic bones were found associated with implements of flint and greenstone[3]. Another round barrow contained the remains of three horses, accompanied, however, by a bronze dagger as well as pottery[4]. The famous Rudstone barrow, in which horse teeth were discovered, furnished large quantities of implements, all of stone[5]. With these typical cases, the reader may compare those described by Mr J. R. Mortimer, whose researches were also made in Yorkshire[6]. If it be objected that round barrows are not Neolithic, it must be remembered that the Yorkshire round barrows form a special class. They enclose human remains which do not belong to one race only, and many of them are now assigned to the Transition period which is known as the Aeneolithic (i.e. Bronze-Stone Age)[7]. When stone implements alone are found in the barrows, the early, or, at least, transitional character of such mounds is emphasized.

There is other evidence available. Professor Boyd Dawkins has recorded the discovery of remains of the horse (*Equus caballus*) from five British bone caves, and from one refuse heap in North Wales, all the stations being considered as

[1] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* pp. 91–2.

[2] W. Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, p. 750. [3] *Ibid.* p. 136.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 220. [5] *Ibid.* p. 262 n.

[6] J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, 1905, pp. 25, 26, 37, 41 etc.

[7] *British Barrows*, pp. 122, 127–9, 482, 543, 549. Dr W. Wright, in *Jour. of Anatomy*, N.S. XIX. 1905, esp. pp. 441–2.

belonging to the Neolithic period[1]. Mr W. J. Knowles, in a letter to the writer, dated February 10, 1909, states that he has frequently found teeth and bones of the horse at the Whitepark Bay site, co. Antrim; the associated implements found there are classed as early Neolithic or Mesolithic. Although Mr Knowles has not himself found the relics in the "old floor," he believes that they were derived from that level; moreover, the Rev. G. R. Buick has actually obtained similar remains from this undisturbed "black layer." Again, Mr Wintour F. Gwinnell informs me that he has in his possession horse teeth, which there is every reason to believe were found in association with a flint celt, also in his possession. The implement and the teeth were dug up at Wiggonholt, in Sussex. Dr A. Irving, again, describing to the British Association (1910) horse remains found at Bishops Stortford, claimed that the relics were those of a late Pleistocene type of animal, and further that this type persisted down to the Early Iron Age. Since the associated objects included some which belonged to the Bronze and Early Iron, as well as the Neolithic, periods, the age of this particular deposit could not, unfortunately, be settled beyond dispute. Some have even thought the remains modern[2].

There is thus a measure of reasonableness in the belief that "the horse has been here all the time," as a witty naturalist once expressed it. It is also not improbable that Neolithic man of Britain had tamed the animal, and that, partly in consequence, it had become less familiar to the primitive butcher. That the horse was eaten by man during the Bronze Age seems proven. The bones and teeth found in grave-mounds of the period appear to be the relics of funeral feasts. Mr J. R. Mortimer,

[1] W. Boyd Dawkins, *Cave Hunting*, 1874, p. 166. Rev. R. A. Gatty has recorded the discovery of bones of a young horse in Neolithic pit-dwellings near Hornsea, Yorkshire (*Chambers's Journal*, 6th Ser., Feb. 1909, p. 109). For the Whitepark Bay discoveries, see *Jour. Roy. Hist. and Archaeol. Assoc. of Ireland*, 4th Ser., VII. pp. 122–3, 123 n. Professor J. Cossar Ewart thinks that "it is extremely probable that in Neolithic, as in Pleistocene times, Britain possessed several species of wild horses." (*Trans. Highland and Agric. Soc. of Scotland*, 5th Ser., XVI. p. 242.) W. F. Gwinnell, in *S.E. Naturalist*, 1907, p. L. F. Keller, *Lake Dwellings of Switzerland*, 2nd edition, 1878, I. pp. 592, 595, records, with reserve, the discovery of iron horseshoes at the Early Iron lake settlement at Starnberger See, Bavaria.

[2] *Nature*, LXXXI. p. 223; LXXXV. p. 22. *Naturalist*, 1911, p. 174.

who has excavated large numbers of barrows of the Aeneolithic and Bronze Ages, deems it certain that the horse was eaten at the burial banquet. He relies for proof mainly on the fact that the bones were always found detached, and often broken[1].

From a study of classical references to the horse, and from a comparison of survivals existing among primitive peoples, one is led to infer that the horse was first domesticated, not for riding, but for yoking to carts and chariots. By some writers it is conjectured that there was even an earlier stage, when Turko-Tartaric tribes impounded the horse and reared it for the sake of its milk and flesh. In corroboration of this hypothesis, Professor Ridgeway and Dr O. Schrader refer to the modern Kalmucks and Tartars, who retain a rooted preference for mares' milk, a legacy from the days when this liquid was used for daily nutrition[2]. Among other races, and in other climes, the ox may have had a parallel history. But from this debateable ground we move to matters better attested. Riding a horse (*κελητίζειν*) was such a rare and curious exhibition in ancient Greece, that but a single casual instance is recorded in the writings of Homer. Equestrian exercise was "the half-foreign accomplishment of the Kentauroi[3]." It has, indeed, been suggested that the fable concerning the Thessalian Centaurs, who were half-man and half-horse, originated in accounts of the earliest feats of horsemanship. At Marathon (B.C. 490), the Persians, but not the Greeks, used cavalry. The story of the horse in Greece seems to have been repeated in Ireland, as shown by the poetical literature of the latter country. Professor Ridgeway states that, in the earliest Irish epics, the warriors all fight from chariots—there are no riders on horseback. In the later cycle—that of Finn and Ossian (A.D. 150–300), horses are little used, and, when mentioned at all, they are ridden.

Herodotus tells us of tribes who lived North of the Danube and who possessed horses of a peculiar kind. The description

[1] *Forty Years' Researches*, p. 198.

[2] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 478. Cf. O. Schrader, *Prehist. Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, 1900, p. 263.

[3] W. E. Gladstone, *Homer* (Macmillan, 1889), pp. 137–8. Homer's references to chariots are discussed by A. Lang, in *Anthropology and the Classics*, ed. R. R. Marett, 1908, pp. 55–6. Cf. *Athenaeum*, May 7th, 1910, pp. 557–8.

is somewhat precise. The horses were small and flat-nosed (or "short-faced") and were incapable of carrying men (*σμικροὺς δὲ καὶ σιμοὺς καὶ ἀδυνάτους ἄνδρας φέρειν*). The animals were covered entirely with a coat of shaggy hair, five fingers in length—about 3½ inches. (*ἐπὶ πέντε δακτύλους τὸ βάθος*—"to the depth of five fingers.") Though not strong enough to bear men, the horses, when yoked to chariots, were among the swiftest known[1]. While some writers have seen in this passage an allusion to creatures of the type of the Shetland pony, Professor Ridgeway has remarked that the description agrees well with the skeletons of horses found near Mâcon (Saône-et-Loire), especially in respect to the short, ugly-shaped skulls[2].

The Hebrew Scriptures contain numerous references to the horse, in connection with both riding and charioteering. Yet it is noteworthy that no mention is made of the animal at all until after the return of the Israelites from Egypt. Earlier enumerations of patriarchal wealth speak of sheep, oxen, camels, and asses, but not of horses. The first mention of the horse on Egyptian monuments appears during the 18th Dynasty (c. B.C. 1520)[3]. After the Egyptian Captivity, Scriptural allusions begin to grow common. No lover of literary form will forget Job's magnificent description of a war-horse, whose neck is clothed with thunder, and the glory of whose nostrils is terrible[4]. It is well, too, to remember, as an historical event, the establishment, by David, of a force of cavalry and charioteers after his crushing defeat of Hadadezer[5].

The deplorable deficiency of pictorial art in the Neolithic and Bronze periods deprives us of the means of fully checking the sequence of the stages in horse-taming in Europe. The rock-carvings, however, of Norway and Sweden, which date from the

[1] Herodotus, *Hist.* l. v. c. 9. Cf. Rawlinson's translation, III. p. 215, and Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 94. For a discussion concerning Herodotus as an observer and speculator on ancient customs see J. L. Myers, in *Anthropology and the Classics*, ed. R. R. Marett, 1908, pp. 121–68.

[2] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 94. V. Hehn, *Wanderings of Plants and Animals*, ed. J. S. Stallybrass, 1885, pp. 35–68, has some valuable information on this phase of the subject.

[3] Rawlinson, *op. cit.* II. pp. 352–3.

[4] Job xxxix. 19–25.

[5] 2 Sam. viii. 4.

Bronze Age, show that the horse was used for riding and driving[1]. That this age was preceded, in Scandinavia or Central Europe, by an era when the horse was employed for traction and transport only, is very probable. Swiss lake-dwellings of the Bronze Age seem to indicate an overlapping of the stages. The discovery, on these sites, of numerous horse-bits and wooden wheels would suggest that the villagers both rode horses and drove waggons or chariots[2].

An incidental matter is of some little interest. How did the very earliest horsemen—who, by the way, would ride bare-backed—mount their steeds? Stirrups, and perhaps even bridles, were, at the beginning of the experiments, unknown. Four modes have been suggested as possible: vaulting, vaulting with the help of a pole or spear, making the horse crouch, and lastly, as in the old Persian fashion, stepping from a slave's back[3].

That the Britons of Caesar's day were expert equestrians and charioteers, is sufficiently clear from the *Commentaries*[4]. The great general describes, with manifest admiration, the manner in which the Britons, suddenly quitting their chariots, charged the Romans in an unequal contest on foot (*ex essedis desilirent et pedibus dispari proelio contenderent*)[5]. More startling still was the amazing trick, exhibited by the drivers of chariots, of running along the pole, or standing upon the yoke, while the chariot was going at full speed.

While the Celts of Britain were pre-eminently noted for their fighting by a combination of infantry and cavalry, some of the more Easterly Aryan races were unaccustomed to the latter mode of warfare. Dr Schrader, whose authority has already been invoked on the question of the use of mare's milk by tribes living on the Asiatic steppes, brings out the contrast by a reference to the European Celts. These Celts built waggons and chariots, and it seems probable, from a study of the Latin

[1] *Guide to Bronze Age*, p. 104. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 140–1.

[3] *Spectator*, Sept. 19, 1908, p. 407. See also, especially, Ridgeway, *op. cit.* Chap. v. ("The Development of Equitation").

[4] Caesar, *De Bell. Gall.*, l. IV. cc. 24, 33; l. v. cc. 8, 11, 12, 13, 15. Cf. E. Conybeare, *Roman Britain*, 1903, pp. 93, 99.

[5] *De Bell. Gall.*, l. v. c. 16. On the question of early chariots see Ridgeway, *op. cit.* pp. 215, 217, 481–2. Tozer, *op. cit.* pp. 20–1, 24–6.

vocabulary, that the Romans were dependent on the vanquished for the manufacture of such objects. Dr Schrader cites, among other words, *reda*, a mail-coach, and *carrus*, a waggon, which are derived from Celtic sources[1]. To Dr Schrader's list may be added Caesar's word for chariot, *essedum*, and its synonym, employed by Tacitus, *covinus*[2].

Since it is not intended to trace here fully the story of the horse in historic times, a short digression may be allowed in order to notice one or two important details. That the Saxons practised horsemanship to some extent is proved by Bede's allusion to a party of young men trying the speed of their horses on an open piece of ground[3]. Much earlier, in the reign of Alexander Severus, about A.D. 222, there is an authentic record of horse-races, but these were probably held under Roman patronage. Like records are known, referring to races at the Roman stations of Netherby, Caerleon, Silchester, and Dorchester[4]. King Athelstan paid some attention to the breeding of horses, and imported animals from Spain to improve the species[5]. William of Malmesbury describes a present sent to this monarch by Hugh the Great, Count of Paris. A portion of the gift consisted of race-horses (*equos cursores*), with their rich trappings (*cum phaleris*)[6]. Again, William Fitzstephen, writing in the twelfth century, supplies us with a spirited and detailed account of an English horse-race[7]. During the reigns of John and Edward III. horse-breeding received further encouragement; the latter king forbade the exportation of English horses. Henry VIII. made various enactments with a like general purpose, but stress was especially laid on the deterioration of breed due to promiscuous crossing of strains. The pasturing of entire horses on the common lands was therefore forbidden[8]. Gradually the English cart-horse

[1] Schrader, *Prehist. Antiquities*, p. 263.

[2] C. T. Lewis and C. Short, *Lat. Dict.*, under the words cited.

[3] P. H. Newman, in *Social England*, ed. Traill, 1894, I. p. 225.

[4] *The Horse in History*, pp. 75–6.

[5] *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1906, Art. "Horse."

[6] Gulielmus Malmsburiensis, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, l. II. c. 135.

[7] See edition of Fitzstephen's work, edited by "An Antiquary" (S. Pegge), 1772, pp. 37–8, 67–8. Cf. H. Morley's translation, prefixed to the edition of Stow's *Survey of London*, 1890, pp. 26–7.

[8] *Chambers's Encyclopaedia, loc. cit.*

began to be developed—to some extent, perhaps, from sires and dams of the old war-horse type. By the time of Charles II., James II., and William of Orange, marked changes became apparent[1]. But there is no space at present to pursue the subject. Else we might refer to the evolution of the modern racehorse, and the rise of the bewildering breeds which one sees to-day. In the next chapter, however, it will be shown by what means the horse came to supplant the ox for work in the fields and on the high roads.

A sudsidiary matter must be lightly touched. Were the horses of classical times provided with shoes? Much contradictory evidence has been put forward in reply, and the case seems to depend upon the periodical swing of ancient opinion and practice, neither of which moved uniformly. At times, shoeing was entirely deprecated. Yet the feet of Roman horses of the first century B C. were often clad with coverings of reeds or hemp (*soleae sparteae*), or, more rarely, with leather[2]. These coverings constituted a sort of sandal, and it has been supposed that their use was temporary, as is the case to-day with the leather slippers worn by horses when drawing a mowing machine across a lawn. Thin soles or shoes of iron were also used, being fixed, according to Mr Basil Tozer, to the leather cap just described[3]. Whether this were the actual mode of attachment or not, we find Nero, in the first century A.D., shoeing his mules with "soleae" of silver, instead of iron, while his wife Poppaea, with the arrogance of wealth, used plates of gold for a similar purpose[4]. Professor Ridgeway supposes that the next advance from the sole of metal would be to cut a piece out of the middle, thus economizing material, and giving the horse a firmer grip[5]. This lies in the realm of conjecture, but of more direct importance is Professor Ridgeway's opinion that there is no reason to

[1] Tozer, *op. cit.* pp. 207, 236. For the question of horse-breeding generally, see Ridgeway, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 358-60.

[2] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 502. Tozer, *op. cit.* pp. 42, 83.

[3] Tozer, *op. cit.* p. 73. The iron shoes of mules were detachable (Catullus, *Carm.*, XVII. ll. 25-6).

[4] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 502. J. Beckmann, *History of Inventions, Discoveries, and Origins*, tr. W. Johnston, 4th edition, 1846, I. p. 444. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* l. XXXIII. c. 49.

[5] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 502.

doubt the Roman date of certain horseshoes found in France, seeing that the associated objects pointed to that period[1]. Horseshoes of supposed Roman date are exhibited in various museums. Four specimens are to be seen in the Guildhall Museum, London; one is sketched in Fig. 83 E.

Richard Berenger (A.D. 1771), in his *History and Art of Horsemanship*, states that a horseshoe was found in the tomb of Childeric I. of France[2] (d. A.D. 481). Berenger gives an illustration of the shoe, copied from De Montfaucon; it has four nail-holes on each side, and looks remarkably like the modern article. Mr Tozer asserts that iron shoes came into regular use in the first half of the sixth century (A.D.). Yet General Pitt-Rivers describes and figures horseshoes (Fig. 83 A, 83 B) which were found in the Romano-British settlements of Woodyates and Woodcuts, in Cranborne Chase. He records other specimens, and asserts that the people of that period shod their horses with iron[3]. Professor Ridgeway, while believing it improbable that the Angles brought with them any particular shape of horseshoe[4], reproduces from the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* Professor T. McKenny Hughes's

[1] *Ibid.* p. 503. Cf. Syer Cumming, in *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, VI. p. 411.

[2] R. Berenger, *Hist. and Art of Horsemanship*, 1771, p. 322. [I have not seen the original drawing by Father B. De Montfaucon, but have read his remarks on horseshoes, in *L'Antiquité expliquée*, tr. D. Humphreys, 1722, IV. pp. 50–1.] J. Beckmann, *op. cit.* I. pp. 451–2, gives several reasons against the genuineness of the Childeric shoe.

[3] Tozer, *op. cit.* p. 83. Gen. A. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, I. pp. 83–4, 97, 247; II. p. 139; III. pp. 84, 138, 141. The hippo-sandal is discussed in I. pp. 77–9. C. Roach Smith, *Collectanea Antiqua*, III. pp. 128–9; also his *Illustrations of Roman London*, 1859, pp. 145–6. F. Keller, *Lake Dwellings of Switzerland*, I. pp. 592, 595. G. Payne, in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 1897, XXII. p. 73. Cf. W. Youatt, *The Horse*, 1888, pp. 440–1. For the Northumberland horseshoe see H. M. Neville, *A Corner in the North*, 1909, pp. 110–11. For the merits of shoeing horses see *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture*, ed. C. E. Green and D. Young, 1908, Art. "Horse shoeing." A somewhat popular account of the horse's foot is given in Sir Charles Bell's *The Hand*, 8th edition, 1885, pp. 61–64.

[4] Ridgeway, *op. cit.* p. 503. Mr L. Jewitt, *Grave-Mounds and their Contents*, 1870, asserts (p. 201) that horseshoes are occasionally met with in burials of the Roman-British period and (p. 264) that they have been recorded from Anglo-Saxon graves in Berkshire. The conclusions reached by Prof. T. McKenny Hughes, in *Proc. Camb. Antiq. Soc.*, X. 1904, pp. 249–58, should be consulted; they vary somewhat from those given in the text. On the general question, see *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, VI. pp. 406–18; *Antiquary*, 1911, N.S., VII. p. 275.

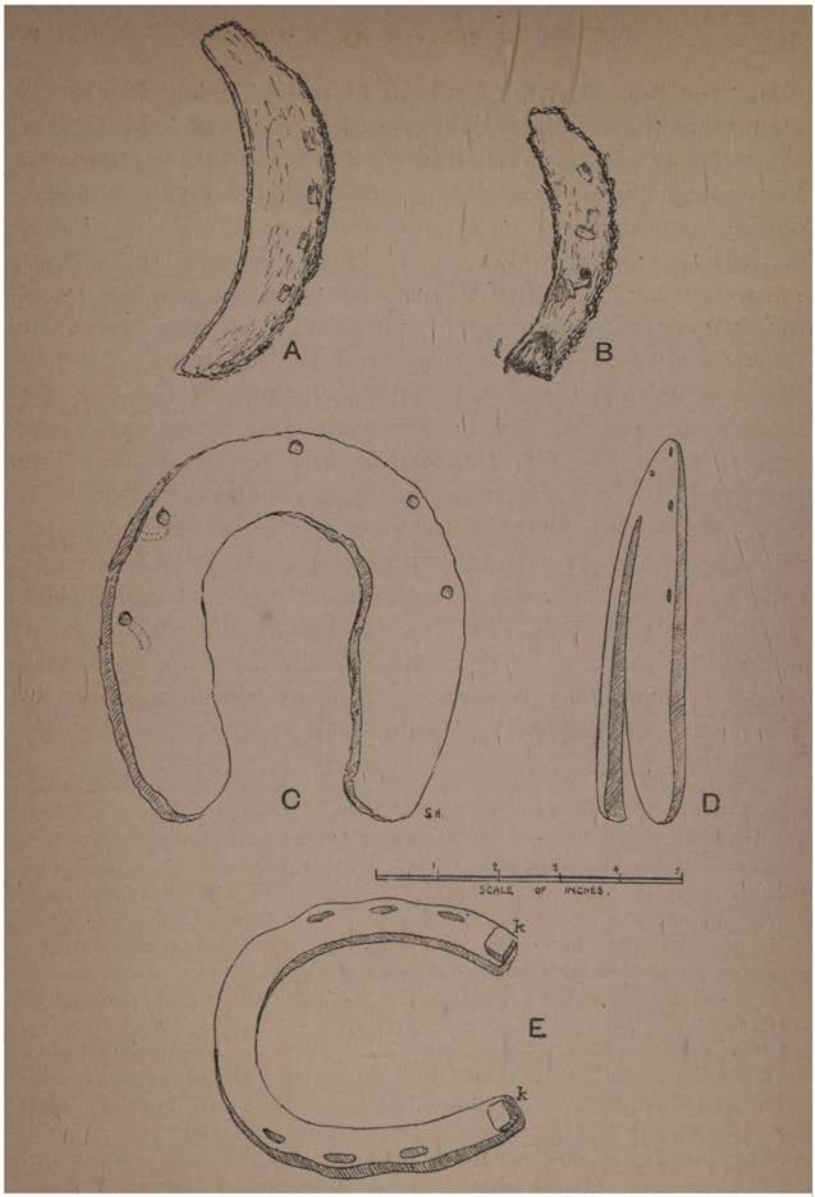

FIG. 83. **A, B.** Portions of small horseshoes, much corroded, found by Pitt-Rivers in Cranborne Chase. The worn fragment, **B**, exhibits three holes, with **T**-shaped nails. There is a calkin at *k*, formed by turning up the lower surface of the shoe. **C.** Ancient horseshoe found by Mr E. C. Youens, at Edenbridge, Kent. The shoe, which is formed of wrought iron, is markedly concavo-convex, the convex surface being the lower one. The "wale-holes" are very near the edge. There is no raised rim. **D.** Side view of the same shoe. **E.** Small horseshoe, Guildhall Museum, London. Roman layer, City. The curve is sinuous, the holes are elliptical, and the calkins are well formed.

drawings of seven Old English shoes, two of which, the circular and the split types, would appear to be rather primitive.

We need not linger over the allusion to horseshoes in Domesday Book. The reference to the blacksmiths of Hereford, who were liable to be called upon to make horseshoes for the king at a fixed rate, is well known to most students.

The circular horseshoe, which has just been mentioned, and which is occasionally dug up in the Fens, is still commonly employed in Northumberland. Through the kindness of the Rev. Hastings M. Neville, of Ford, Cornhill-on-Tweed, I am enabled to give illustrations of this form of shoe (Figs. 84, 85). The shoe, which has been somewhat abraded by wear, is markedly convex on the lower surface, and correspondingly concave where it is fitted to the hoof. In this respect it resembles the broad shoe (Fig. 83 C, D) of the ordinary outline, discovered in making a main drainage trench at Edenbridge, Kent. This latter specimen is now in the possession of Mr C. E. Youens, of Dartford, through whose courtesy a sketch has been obtained. As in the Northumbrian example, the "wale-holes" are very near the margin; but while the iron of the former shoe is carried completely round to give support behind, the Edenbridge specimen does not even possess calkins—that is, portions projecting downward at the "heel." The Edenbridge shoe appears to be Mediaeval, but it may perhaps be Saxon, or even of earlier date. The specimen should be compared with the Mediaeval examples in the Guildhall Museum.

The circular form of shoe, according to Mr James Weatherston, the blacksmith at Duddo, near Norham, Northumberland, is advantageous to a horse which has a weak "toe" or heel. This shape has been used from time immemorial. Sometimes a leather sole, covering the whole foot, is placed between the hoof and the circular shoe. Again, a detachable iron plate, or "complete shoe," is occasionally screwed on to the outside surface of the round one, so that, by removing the plate, the horse's foot can be examined without interfering with the shoe. In this case, the leather sole is omitted. The screws or "cogs" are square-headed, and project to such a degree that the animal walks on them alone.

The purpose of the convexity of the round shoe is to break the shock as the horse's foot strikes the ground. The efficacy of this shoe is specially noticeable with "foundered" horses—those which have inflamed feet. An animal, thus suffering, tends to tread more on the heel than the toe, and the convexity allows a better grip to be obtained. Indeed, the ordinary form of shoe is sometimes slightly bent for the same reason. The Northumberland practice, with regard to "soles" and round shoes, while

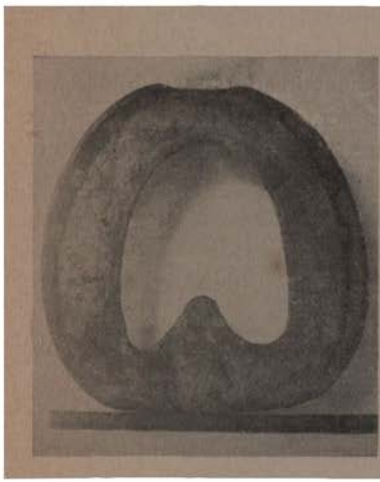

FIG. 84. Round horseshoe, lower convex surface, from Ford, Northumberland. Greatest breadth 6½ inches.

FIG. 85. Round horseshoe, upper concave surface. Scale of inches shown.

now based on expert veterinary principles, seems to represent a primitive plan. It is noteworthy that the round form of shoe is especially prized as a bringer of luck. Obviously, it is the material of the shoe—witch-hated iron—which is there considered important; all folk-memory respecting the virtues of the crescentic shape has perished. Youatt describes a shoe, under the name of the "bar-shoe," which appears roughly to correspond to the Northumberland type[1]. The observant person will occasionally see a London dray horse wearing a somewhat similar kind of shoe, the difference being in the hinder portion, which is either straight or slightly re-entering. This peculiar mode of shoeing,

[1] This form was also formerly used around Cerne Abbas, Dorsetshire.

in all cases, seems to be due to the advice of the veterinary surgeon. It will be well, for anyone who wishes to pursue the subject, to read the opinions of the authorities already given (pp. 423 n., 424 n.).

A slight digression may here be made to consider a kindred topic. Iron objects of peculiar shape, commonly called hippo-sandals, have been discovered in various places, notably by Pitt-Rivers, in the Romano-British settlements in Cranborne Chase. Some authorities have thought that the hippo-sandal represents a kind of horseshoe, but Pitt-Rivers agrees with Fleming in scouting this theory. The shape, he considers, would be inconvenient for this purpose. Moreover, horseshoes, and—so it is believed—ox-shoes, are represented among the relics of the settlements, so that another type of shoe, he argues, would scarcely be found at the same spot. This objection is, as Mr C. Roach Smith has hinted, not conclusive against the use of hippo-sandals for special occasions. The suggestion was made by Pitt-Rivers that the hippo-sandals were intended for shoeing the poles of sledges, and he figures a form of that vehicle in which the shaft skids along the ground. In a footnote, however, he betrays some uncertainty, and admits that specimens of hippo-sandals which are displayed in the Museum at Mayence must have been fitted to the feet of horses, probably as splints when the hoofs had been accidently broken, The hippo-sandals, in those cases, would doubtless be attached by cords or straps which passed through the iron rings. Mr Roach Smith, writing in 1859, stated that iron pattens, fastened to the hoof by means of leather straps, were still used in Holland. This fact supplies, doubtless, the key to the puzzle. The hippo-sandal shown in the illustration (Fig. 86) was discovered, along with many other relics, at the Roman villa at Darenth, in Kent, and was first figured by Mr George Payne, in *Archaeologia Cantiana.* About half a dozen specimens are on view in the Guildhall Museum[1]. In connection with this subject it may be noted that Youatt, in his book on *The Horse*, describes and illustrates a light kind of open-work sandal for horses with delicate hoofs, made of strap-work and iron clips.

[1] See list of references, p. 424 *supra.*

A slight retrospect of the shoeing question will be made when we deal with oxen, but we must now return to the British horsemen of the Early Iron Age. At that period, so engrossing was the craft of the chariot-warrior, that care was often taken to provide the dead chieftain with the means of renewing his pastime elsewhere. Thus it was not unusual to inter a horse, or chariot, or both of these, in the burial mound. Keysler quotes numerous instances of the custom, chiefly with respect to the

FIG. 86. Hippo-sandal, found on the site of a Roman villa, at Darenth, Kent, and now in the Rochester Museum.

ancient Scythian and Scandinavian peoples[1]. Records also implicate Tartars, Franks, Wends, and Finns as agents in like ceremonies. A well-known passage in Virgil seems to show that the practice obtained in classical times. Aeneas, on his descent into the lower regions, views with wonder the empty chariots of the chiefs, and the horses feeding at large on the plain. The heroes retained their old fondness for chariots and

[1] J. G. Keysler, *Antiquitates Selectae Septentrionales et Celticae*, 1720, pp. 115, 168–9, 518.

shining steeds[1], and these necessaries had evidently been deposited in the earth at the time of the funeral.

The English records of chariot-burial are fairly numerous. The Rev. E. W. Stillingfleet (c. A.D. 1816), and Canon W. Greenwell (A.D. 1876), excavated several round barrows at a farm called Arras, near Market Weighton, in Yorkshire, and discovered therein remains of horses, chariots, and harness. Associated with these mute memorials, there was found, in one instance, a boar's tusk, which had been invested with some ceremonial value, since it was perforated with a square hole, and was mounted in a brazen case. Interments of this class belong usually to the Late-Celtic period. A small urn, of unspecified age, dug up near Eastbourne in 1778, contained about a dozen horse's teeth. Mr J. Romilly Allen compiled a considerable list of instances of chariot-burial. Many others are given in the *Guide to the Early Iron Age* (British Museum), as well as in the writings of Messrs L. Jewitt and J. R. Mortimer. So recently as 1906, a chariot-burial was discovered at Hunmanby, in Yorkshire, and was described by Canon Greenwell in *Archaeologia*[2]. The "trappings" found in connection with the other remains comprised bridle-bits, buckles, head-ornaments, and similar articles.

One of the Wold barrows, which was opened by Canon Greenwell, contained a whole chariot and the bones of two horses, placed alongside a human skeleton. In another mound the wheels alone had been buried[3]. A third grave yielded wheels and an iron bit[4]. Similar discoveries were made at Nanterre, in France; horses were found entombed with portions of their trappings, together with tires of wheels, and various bronze and iron objects, evidently betokening a Transitional period[5]. In all the foregoing cases we must suppose that the

[1] Virgil, *Aeneid*, l. VI. ll. 885–7.

[2] J. R. Allen, *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1904, pp. 64–5, 94–5, R. A. Smith, *Guide to Early Iron Age* (Brit. Mus.), 1905, pp. 50, 73, 90 etc. L. Jewitt, *op. cit.* pp. 201, 264–5. J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, pp. 358, 359. Ridgeway, *op. cit.*, deals fully with the subject. The *Naturalist*, 1905, pp. 264–5, also gives a list of chariot-burials. *Archaeologia*, 1906, LX. pp. 281 et seqq., pp. 311–2. R. Munro, *Prehistoric Scotland*, 1899, pp. 247–50.

[3] *British Barrows*, pp. 454, 455. [4] *Ibid.* p. 456.

[5] B. C. A. Windle, *Remains of the Prehistoric Age in England*, 1904, p. 287.

horse was sacrificed at its master's funeral—the coincidence of natural or of violent death must have been exceedingly uncommon save in warfare. The custom of chariot-burial persisted for centuries into the Christian era, and an assemblage of relics, kindred to those mentioned, is common in Scandinavian graves of the Viking Age (A.D. 700—1000), wherein unburnt bodies were interred[1]. Again, an Anglo-Saxon grave at Reading was shown to contain the skeleton of a horse, human bones, and a sword remarkably rich in its ornament[2]. At a still later date, A.D. 1389, when Bertrand Duguesclin was buried at St Denis, several horses, which had been previously blessed by the Bishop of Auxerre, were sacrificed, or, as one account says, compounded for by the owners.

Were we ignorant of the foregoing facts, certain modern practices of an analogous nature would have to be dismissed as inexplicable. Once acquainted with the ancient instances, however, the student can account for the atavism which here and there betrays itself. We cannot, of course, in the absence of overlapping evidence, be certain that the burial of the horse along with its master is a custom which has never died out. There may have been a continuous bond of tradition, or again, folk-memory may have lain almost dormant for centuries, to be unconsciously revived at a later time. A few instances will now be rapidly surveyed.

A surgeon, one Mr Thomas Sheffield, dying in 1798, at Downton, in Wiltshire, left instructions that he should be interred in his garden, and that, when his favourite horse should die, it was to be laid by his side. Mr Sheffield was buried as he desired, but in 1807 his body was removed to the village churchyard[3]. We are left to infer that the horse was placed in its master's grave, as was undoubtedly done in the case, quoted by

[1] J. J. A. Worsaae, *Pre-history of the North*, tr. H. F. M. Simpson, 1886, p. 192; also (by the same writer), *Industrial Arts of Denmark*, 1882, pp. 190–2.

[2] Baron J. de Baye, *Indus. Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 18. Prof. É. Metchnikoff, who cites the case of Duguesclin, gives an additional instance from Treves, A.D. 1781. See *Nature of Man*, tr. P. Chambers Mitchell, 1906, p. 141. See also *Prim. Culture*, I. p. 474.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., XII. p. 158. See, especially, E. P. Squarey, *The "Moot" and its Traditions*, 1906, pp. 34–5.

Southey, in which a man of Salisbury, "in derision of religion," commanded that his horse should be slaughtered and buried with him[1]. Again, so recently as 1866, when Queen Victoria's huntsman died, his favourite horse was shot, and its ears were placed in his coffin and buried in his grave in Sunninghill churchyard, Berkshire[2]. Parenthetically, we notice that, in Patagonia, the horse of a deceased person is still killed at the grave[3]. Such incidents as these do not seem to be far removed in time from the days of barrow burial. Not quite so apposite is the case of Wellington's horse, Copenhagen, which was buried (A.D. 1836) with full military honours at Strathfieldsaye (Hampshire), and which was commemorated by a tombstone bearing an appropriate inscription and epitaph. In thus honouring his charger, however, the Duke had a prototype in the Emperor Augustus, who, as Pliny relates, erected a tomb to his horse, on which occasion Germanicus Caesar wrote a poem[4]. Turn the facts which way we will, they seem to tell of an ingrained instinct which unexpectedly reveals itself to the surprise of the majority of folk—surprise, nevertheless, which speedily becomes tinged with sympathy.

Not so distinctly a reversion, but still probably a custom derived from primitive observances, was the Mediaeval ceremony, when a great person was buried, of leading his horse before the body and presenting the animal to the ecclesiastical authorities as an obituary due[5]. Such legacies were very common, so that a single example will suffice. At the obsequies of Henry V., three war-steeds were led to the altar, and were there formally bequeathed to the Church[6]. It will be fresh in the memory of all, how, at the funeral of King Edward VII., that monarch's favourite horse was led by a groom behind the body of his late master.

In considering how far these lingering customs may represent

[1] R. Southey, *Letters of Espriella*, 1st edition, 1807, I. pp. 52–3.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., VI. p. 73.

[3] G. Rawlinson, in his edition of Herodotus, 1880, III. p. 63 n.

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. VIII. c. 64.

[5] E. Howlett, in *Curious Church Customs*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p. 129.

[6] G. S. Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the Eng. Church*, 1899, p. 245. M. H. Bloxam, *Monumental Architecture of Great Britain*, 1834, pp. 96, 102.

real survivals, it will be of some assistance to collect examples showing to what extent the horse cult was observed in the ceremonial routine of the ancient Celts and Teutons. In the first place, we are struck by the respect which was paid to white horses in particular. Tacitus, in a familiar passage, asserts that the German tribes kept milk-white horses in consecrated woods and groves[1]. From these horses, which were never degraded by being put to any kind of labour, warnings and auguries were received by the priestly caste. Grimm tells us that there existed, at Drontheim, temples in which sacred horses were kept and fed[2]. Other peoples have betrayed a similar affection for the white horse. Such animals, Virgil relates are not usually put to work, since they are beloved of the gods; it is criminal to kill or wound them, except for sacrifice. Herodotus describes how the sacred white horses of the Persians were drowned when Cyrus was endeavouring to cross the river Gyndes[3]. The same writer states that, in his day, Russia teemed with white horses[4]. White was pre-eminently the noble colour. In the Apocalypse, a white horse is symbolical of victory and triumph[5]. This idea is also common among classical writers[6]. The figure of a white horse appeared on the Standard of the Saxons, and later, in the arms of Saxony and the House of Brunswick. In our day, a white horse constitutes the Kentish emblem, and is popular as a tavern sign. The celebrated "White Horse" carved on the Chalk downs near Uffington, Berkshire, and its fellow, incised on Bratton Hill, near Westbury, Wiltshire, though usually believed to commemorate victories over the Danes, are more probably to be referred to the Late Bronze, or Early Iron Age. In each case, the neighbouring country abounds with prehistoric remains—earthworks, barrows, and trackways[7]. Certain details

[1] Tacitus, *De Moribus Germaniae*, c. 10.

[2] J. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, trans. J. G. Stallybrass, 1883, II. p. 655.

[3] Herodotus, *Hist.*, l. I. c. 189; l. VII. c. 55. Grimm, *op. cit.* IV. p. 1483, concerning sacred horses alluded to by Plutarch.

[4] Herodotus, *Hist.*, l. IV. c. 52.

[5] Rev. vi. 2, and xix. 11.

[6] See the authorities cited by J. Timbs, *Curiosities of Science*, 6th edition, 1862, p. 191.

[7] See the details collected in *Folk-Memory*, 1908, pp. 323, 325.

of the carvings, such as the bird-like head of the Uffington Horse, and the crescentic tail of the original, but now destroyed, "Horse" of Bratton, have been compared with corresponding features on early British coins[1]. These coins were probably debased representations of the gold stater of Philip II. of Macedon. In modern times, other intaglios have been cut on our hillsides; these, while reviving the practice, have introduced breeds of horses unknown to the Britons. This seems a fitting place to observe that we have some indication of horse figures in Late-Celtic ornament. On a Late-Celtic bucket (*c.* first century B.C.) unearthed near Marlborough, in 1807, and enclosing burnt human bones, curious representations of the horse were carved[2]. Belonging to about the same period are the queer horse-like figures depicted on a bronze-mounted wooden bucket, coming from the Late-Celtic cemetery of Aylesford, Kent[3]. And, to conclude this section of our subject, we will note that the Anglo-Saxon tumulus in Taplow churchyard, Bucks. (cf. p. 81 *supra*), yielded portions of a bucket decorated with horseshoe symbols[4]. We find representations of supposed horses appearing later on church fonts; the celebrated eleventh-century font of Burnsall, in Wharfedale, will serve as an example[5].

Our discussion of the white horse has carried us far afield, and may have momentarily masked the general question. Not white horses alone were used in sacrifice and divination. The sacrifice of any horse was a most solemn event, attended with much ceremony, alike among Persians and Indians, among Teutons, Finns and Slavs[6]. In auguries, too, the animal bore an honoured part. The Greeks, Strabo informs us, deemed the neighing of a horse an omen of good[7]. In Germany, divinations by means of the horse lasted till the seventh century, for, when St Gall died,

[1] *Folk-Memory*, pp. 323–6; *Archaeologia*, XXI. 289–98; *Vict. Hist. of Berks.*, 1906, pp. 188–92.

[2] *Guide to Early Iron Age*, p. 29. [3] *Ibid.* pp. 115–6.

[4] J. Stevens, in *Jour. Archaeol. Assoc.*, XL. 1884, pp. 64–6.

[5] Concerning the development of the interlacing ornament from animal forms, and the further question of the supposed Scandinavian origin of some of these animal figures, see J. Romilly Allen, *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*, 1904, pp. 249–50.

[6] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, I. p. 49. [7] *Ibid.* II. p. 664.

unbroken horses were charged with the burden of his coffin, and to their decision was entrusted the choice of a burial-place[1]. In Denmark, horse-sacrifices lingered until the early part of the eleventh century; a specific instance is given by Keysler, on the authority of the historian Dithmar, who was the Bishop of Mersburg, or Merseburg, and who died A.D. 1028. Dithmar relates that the Danes were wont to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany by sacrificing ninety human victims, together with an equal number of dogs and cocks, in order to appease the infernal

FIG. 87. Capturing the White Horse. In this scene the artist depicts an imaginary incident in connection with the legend of the "White Horse of Kent." The animal, which is of a rather idealized strain, has broken the cords of the captors, and remains "Invictus."

deities[2]. The custom indicates a not infrequent kind of early compromise. Kemble states that, although bulls are known to have been used for divination in England, he knows of no allusion to augury by means of horses[3]. A few faint traces, however, suggestive of the horse cult, may be detected. There is, for

[1] J. M. Kemble, *The Saxons in England*, 1876, II. p. 429.

[2] Keysler, *op. cit.* p. 326. Dufour's French translation gives the number of each kind of victim as 89, but this is evidently an error.

[3] Kemble, *op. cit.* II. p. 429.

example, that curious story, told by Bede, how the priest Coifi rode on a stallion when he went to destroy the images in the heathen temple at Godmundingham (now Goodmanham) in Yorkshire[1] (cf. p. 32 *supra*). As Bede's narrative runs its length, we learn that a high priest among the pagan Saxons might lawfully ride only on a mare[2], and one is inclined to speculate whether any of the idols took the form of this animal. We know that the stallion was the most honoured among horses[3], and it is expressly stated that, when Coifi borrowed the king's stallion, he did so in contempt of his former superstitions. The change of steed, at any rate, coincided with an onslaught upon established custom, and we shall see later that the priestly rule about riding mares only was abandoned. Another vestige of the horse cult was the belief, common among Teutonic peoples, that the last wisp of corn in the harvest field was inhabited by the sacred horse. For this reason, a horse, representing the corn-god, was customarily slaughtered, and eaten with special rites by the reapers at the harvest supper. Professor Frazer describes some quaint harvest customs, prevalent in Hertfordshire and Shropshire, which furnish examples of the corn-spirit, appearing in the shape of a horse or mare. And, again, in his recent work, *Totemism and Exogamy*, he records the Red Indian practice of sacrificing costly horses to appease the "medicine" or corn-spirit[4].

Underlying such observances as those which have been described, there is an idea which gives a clue to a much-discussed problem. Folk of our generation are continually asking why the flesh of such a clean-feeding animal as the horse—a true vegetarian—should be despised as food. The question is not indeed altogether of recent date, for it was propounded in A.D. 1720 by Keysler, who reviews the subject at some length[5]. He contends that the stringent prohibition must not be credited to the influence of the Mosaic Law; first, because

[1] Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, l. II. c. 13. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 665.

[4] Grant Allen, *Evolution of the Idea of God*, R.P.A. edition, 1903, p. 122. J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, 1890, II. pp. 24–5; Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 1910, III. p. 391. Cf. *Folk-Lore*, XI. pp. 257–8.

[5] Keysler, *op. cit.* pp. 322–48.

no flesh, in itself, was deemed unclean for the saints, and secondly, because other articles of the ceremonial law had already at various times been abandoned with impunity[1]. The rejection of horse-flesh for food, Keysler concludes, was due to the Christian teachers, who found our pagan ancestors employing the animal in sacrifices and auguries, and eating its flesh in the subsequent repasts; hence, as a mark of disapprobation, this kind of food was forbidden to converts. The results, it is urged by the old antiquary, have been deplorable, more especially, because there is no law of Christ which prescribes this rule of conduct (*Christi certe lex nulla exstat, quae eum agendi modum praescribat*)[2].

These propositions, in the main, seem undeniable. We have seen that the Palaeolithic cave-man ate horseflesh freely, and that the Britons of the Round Barrow Period were probably addicted to a like custom. There is little doubt, again, that throughout Roman Britain horseflesh was a common article of food. This is attested by the frequency of the occurrence of broken bones of the horse in the "Brit-Welsh" caves of the Iron Age[3]. Corroboration of Keysler's theory is afforded by historical facts. Pope Gregory III. (ruled A.D. 731—741), in a letter to St Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, forbade the eating of the flesh of wild horses as an unclean and execrable act[4]. Yet at a somewhat earlier date, Gregory II., when consulted on the same perplexing subject, had sent a temporizing answer, shielding himself behind the famous passage in the Epistle to the Corinthians respecting meat offered to idols[5]. So long as the new faith held its converts insecurely, and wherever Christianity was merely nominal, the frontier line of authority alternatively advanced and receded. Nearly half a century after the death of Gregory III., at the Council of Celchyth (A.D. 787), the consumption of horseflesh was noted as a stain on the character of the British Christians; their fellow-believers in the East were not guilty of such a sin (*quod nullus Christianorum in orientalibus facit*)[6]. Yet the monks of St Gall not only ate horse-flesh, but

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 322–3.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 348.
[3] W. Boyd Dawkins, *Cave Hunting*, 1874, p. 132.
[4] Keysler, *op. cit.* p. 339.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 340.
[6] W. Boyd Dawkins, *op. cit.* p. 132.

returned thanks for it in the metrical grace, written by the monk Ekkehard III. (died *c.* A.D. 1036): "*Sit feralis equi caro dulcis sub cruce Christi.*" Elsewhere, too, the habit seemed incurable. The Norwegians, apparently in paying devotional honour to Odin, still ate the forbidden food during the eleventh and twelfth centuries[1]. The growth of superstition tended to strengthen the Christian ban against horseflesh. This food was the reputed diet of giants and witches[2]; its preparation was associated with sacrifices; it was eaten with hallowed salt. The sacrifices, in turn, were connected with popular assemblies or folk-moots[3]. Now witches and trolls were supposed to live under mounds. Inside these mounds they held their dances, and played on pipes made of horse bones[4]. The hillocks were, as a rule, actually barrows, the burial-places of bygone peoples, and the folk who had once raised them probably not only ate horseflesh ceremonially, but regarded it as welcome fare in times of dearth and scarcity. Successors of the mound builders continued to partake of horseflesh, and coupled the act with the worship of Odin. The ecclesiastical decrees were thus primarily directed against the pagan practice, but, because of superstition, the ban remained when its original necessity had passed away.

L'Abbé Valentin Dufour, who in the year 1868 translated and edited Keysler's valuable chapter on the eating of horseflesh, adds a few facts which bring the story down to modern times. He tells us that the sale of horseflesh was forbidden in Paris in A.D. 1739, no reason being assigned for the prohibition. When, however, in A.D. 1784, a similar promulgation was issued, the ostensible motive was to prevent disease—there were certain maladies "*que l'usage de pareilles chairs ne pouvait manquer d'occasionner*[5]." Since considerable importance was also attached to the assumed novelty of eating horseflesh, Dufour is at some pains to show that slaughter-houses (*bouchcries, écorcheries*) existed, and that the forbidden flesh was vended, during the

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 132, 133.

[2] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, III. p. 1049; IV. pp. 1302, 1304, 1619.

[3] Grimm, *op. cit.* IV. p. 1050.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 1619.

[5] L'Abbé V. Dufour, *Une Question Historique*, 1868, translated from Keysler's *Antiquitates*, p. 65.

early part of the fifteenth century[1]. Statutes continued to be passed against the use of horseflesh in France, until, in the early nineteenth century (1814, 1816, 1817), the commodity was allowed to be sold by certain persons who had secured the special privilege[2]. Scarcity of food was doubtless a factor in bringing about a relaxation. By some writers it is supposed that the revulsion of feeling dates from the siege of Copenhagen (A.D. 1807), when the Danes ate horseflesh from necessity, and that the habit gradually spread all over Europe[3]. This may be true in the general sense, but, archaeologically considered, one may doubt whether the practice had ever been really quite extinct.

The old pre-Christian veneration of the horse probably touches the groundwork of much of the folk-lore about the animal. Professor A. de Gubernatis, in his work on *Zoological Mythology*, deals fully with horse legends as exemplified in the Vedic, Greek, and Latin literatures, and particularly with the horse as the favourite animal of the solar hero[4]. It is common, in ancient art, to find symbols of sun-worship associated either with the horse or the chariot, or with both. All that can be done in this place is to supply the reference. One old story may, nevertheless, be noted: that which tells how the Emperor Caligula spoke of raising his horse to the consulship. The usual explanation attributes the remark to a passing caprice, but another interpretation is conceivable. May it not be that Caligula intended the observation as a compliment to British and Gallic opinions concerning the sanctity of selected horses, opinions with which he must have been well acquainted?

We retrace our steps a little. Evidence seems to show that when the early Palaeolithic cave-men hunted the horse, they were accustomed to carry into their shelters only the fleshy parts of the carcass, together with the head of the animal, and—for ornamental purposes—the valuable tail. The long bones, which were crushed to obtain the marrow, do not appear, as a rule, to

[1] Dufour, *op. cit.* p. 66. [2] *Ibid.* p. 67.
[3] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., X. 1908, p. 245.
[4] A. de Gubernatis, *Zoological Mythology*, 1872, I. pp. 283–357.

have been taken into the caves[1]. Light may be cast on the anomalous separation of flesh and bones by a study of ancient Egyptian custom as described by Herodotus. This writer states that imprecations were heaped on the head of the sacrificial victim, so that any impending evil might fall thereon; the Egyptians, in consequence, would never eat the head of any animal[2]. Strict taboo, as imposed among common folk, is not inconsistent with ceremonial eating by privileged individuals, and numerous instances might be given in support of this antinomy of custom. Merely as a speculation, it might be suggested that the head of the victim was at one time a delicate morsel reserved for the chieftain. In the caves of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, the skull does not seem to be of common occurrence, but in the early historic period, as shown by folk-lore, we catch echoes of its legendary repute. Tacitus relates that the ancient German tribes hung the heads of animals on trees as offerings to Odin. In Teutonic fairy tales, the horse's head works miracles, especially when played upon as an instrument[3]. It was thrown by witches into the Midsummer fire[4]—a notable collocation of details. Russian magic teaches that ambrosia comes out of a horse's head, and enables its possessor to do deeds of prowess. By virtue of this ambrosia one hero discomfited ninety-nine hostile monsters[5]. In parts of Germany, horses' heads were buried in stables; in Holland, they were hung over pigstyes; in Mecklenburg, they were placed under a sick man's pillow[6]. Again, in Lower Saxony, horses' heads, projecting outwards, were carved on the gables of buildings, ostensibly for ornament, but in reality, it is probable, to prevent mischief to the horses kept within. A similar practice was observed by the builders of the older houses in Rhaetia[7]. In modern Norway, the handles of bowls, and the ends of the

[1] Doigneau, *Nos Ancêtres Primitifs*, p. 127. Dr J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, II. pp. 64–5, refers to the Roman custom, at the October chariot-race, of cutting off the tail of the right-hand horse of the victorious team, and states that this was done to ensure a good crop: the horse represented the corn spirit.

[2] Herodotus, *Hist.*, l. II. c. 39. For superstitions respecting the sanctity of the human head, see *Golden Bough*, I. pp. 187–93.

[3] *Teut. Myth.*, IV. p. 1483. [4] *Ibid.* II. p. 661.

[5] *Zool. Myth.*, I. p. 303. [6] *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 661. [7] *Ibid.* p. 660.

wooden lever by which the primitive mangles are worked, are often formed of carved horse-heads. Numerous examples may be seen in the Horniman Museum, London. Specimens are said to have been met with in English houses also. Some authorities considered that the figures represented a Celtic legacy, but Grimm claims that the custom of carving these images, like that of horse-worship generally, belongs "equally to Celts, Teutons, and Slavs[1]." The domain might be much extended. Even in our own day (1865), such carvings as those described have been recorded from Jutland. They were once common, it is stated, in Sussex, and Miss M. Braitmaier has figured a series of modern gable ornaments from different parts of Germany[2]. When someone asked the meaning of the horses' heads on the Jutish gables, the natives answered, "Oh, they are Hengist and Horsa[3]." (Note that the name Hengist = a stallion, and Horsa = a mare.) Whether or not Hengist and Horsa were historical personages may be left in abeyance, the fact remains that they were sometimes represented by horses' heads carried in front of the army as tutelary deities.

In certain parts of England, notably in Kent, there still survives the custom of a group of men going round at Christmas carrying a horse's head, crudely carved in wood, and known as the "hoodening horse." Sometimes, it would appear, a skull long buried in the soil, and afterwards dug up by chance, formed the "wooser," "wooset," or "husset[4]." Mr P. Maylam, who has carefully collated the records of analogous customs from both England and Germany, considers that the word "hoodening" is not, as popularly supposed, derived either from the Norse word Odin or the Low German form Woden. He prefers to connect it with those old performances in which the hobby horse and characters representing Robin Hood and Maid Marian were prominent. A writer in the *Athenaeum* ridicules this idea, and prosaically refers the name to the hood or sack which concealed the supposed body of the horse—really the body of the hoodener,

[1] *Ibid.* p. 660.

[2] M. Braitmaier, in *Folk-Lore*, XI. pp. 322–3, and plates II–VI.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser., VII. p. 10.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., XI. pp. 71–2, 395.

or performer[1]. Yes, but why should the horse, hooded or otherwise, enter into the ceremonies at all? It is easy to deride the early school, of which Grimm is a representative, as old-fashioned and full of extravagances. But we have to face a series of converging customs, which were not begotten of a complex society like that of modern or even Mediaeval England. Only by an appeal to some primitive form of the horse cult can an ultimate solution be really obtained.

Standing in close relationship to the "hoodening horse" custom, is a somewhat weird Welsh practice, which is now nearly extinct, but which some enthusiasts have lately attempted to revive. A horse's skull is dressed up and carried about by a performer who is enveloped in a cloak. He makes the jaws of the skull snap to the accompaniment of Welsh rhymes. Houses are visited, and largesse is demanded. The performance, known colloquially as Mari Lwyd, is traced by some to pre-Reformation usage. But doubtless, it goes back, like the "hoodening horse," of which, perhaps, it is a mere variant, to pagan times[2].

Virgil relates a curious tradition which bears on our subject. As the Carthaginians were digging near a venerable wood, they dug up a horse's skull—a "courser's head," as the phrase runs in Dryden's translation, and this discovery was accounted such a prosperous omen that a temple was raised to Juno on that spot[3]. Professor Conington, garnering his knowledge from several classical writers, gives us the additional information that the head of an ox was first lighted upon, and that this was thought to portend servitude, but after further excavation, the horse's head appeared—an earnest of plenty, combined with success in war[4]. From Vishnu mythology comes a contradictory item, for, in that system, the mouth of hell is conceived as a huge horse head[5].

[1] P. Maylam, "*The Hooden Horse*," *an East Kent Christmas Custom*, 1909, pp. 72–91, 110–20. *Athenaeum*, Feb. 19, 1910, p. 214. In *Folk-Lore*, XXI. 1910, pp. 248–9, it is argued that the "hoodening horse" dates, at least, earlier than the Robin Hood period. Cf. W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the N. Counties*, 2nd edition, 1879, pp. 70–1.

[2] *Daily Chronicle*, Jan. 2, 1908. Much horse-lore of a similar kind may be found in the volumes of *Folk-Lore*, especially XI. and XIII.

[3] Virgil, *Aeneid*, lib. I. ll. 144 et seqq.

[4] J. Conington, in a note in *Works of Virgil*, ed. G. Long, 1884, II. p. 52 n.

[5] *Zool. Myth.*, I. p. 333.

Before quitting this department of folk-lore, we may scan the wider field of skull superstitions in general. A fox's head, nailed to a Scotch stable door, was supposed to keep off the dreaded witch. I noticed an instance of this custom at Rottingdean, near Brighton, in 1908, but cannot be sure that any significance was attached to the fox's head[1]. Why, again, does the game-keeper suspend rows of weasels, stoats, cats, magpies, and jays on his gibbet? Certainly he does this, in the first place, to prove his zealous stewardship, and perhaps with some dimly conscious belief that similar "evil-doers" will take warning. But from observation of other curious practices, scarcely to be discussed here, one suspects that the origin was ceremonial. We must also remember cases like that described by Mr Baring-Gould, who once saw, hanging on a magnificent elm at Westmeston, under Ditchling Beacon, in Sussex, the carcasses of two horses and three calves. The reason offered for this custom was that the suspension of the bodies was lucky for cattle. Keeping, however, to a consideration of heads, we notice that Sir G. L. Gomme records a peculiar instance from Hornchurch, in Essex, where the lessee of the tithes used to pay, as a Christmas tribute, a boar's head. This payment could not depend upon the intrinsic value of the toll, nor could the destruction of a single boar be counted meritorious in itself. The tribute was obviously symbolical. Camden relates that a stag was formerly paid as part of the rent of Church lands situated in Essex. He adds that, when he was a boy, namely, in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, the priests of St Paul's Cathedral were accustomed to meet the stag as it was brought up the steps of the sacred building. The animal's head was then carried on a spear round the cathedral, which echoed meanwhile to the sound of horns. Of this curious ceremony, the young antiquary was an eye-witness[2].

From a review of these facts, we may deduce that the head of a slaughtered animal bore an imputed sanctity. This was

[1] At Burpham, Sussex, the paws of a fox were nailed on the door of the blacksmith's shop "for luck" (1911).

[2] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Ethnology in Folk-Lore*, 1892, pp. 35–6. (Many instances cited.) Mr Baring-Gould's experience is related in *Folk-Lore*, IV. p. 6.

essentially the case when the animal had been offered in sacrifice, and it is to pagan and prehistoric ritual that we must look for an interpretation of the facts. The species of animal esteemed most sacred would vary with the time and the place—here, the horse, there, the ox. Later days brought other competitors for the position of honour. Only by keeping well in mind the widespread belief in the efficacy of skulls, are we enabled to understand another series of records, which we now proceed to summarize.

More than half a century ago, when the chancel of St Botolph's church, Boston, was being rebuilt, a quantity of horses' bones and the jaw-bones of sheep were found under the floor[1]. Again, we have seen that, on the site of the present St Paul's Cathedral, a deposit of bones of oxen and other animals was discovered indicating a pagan site[2] (cf. p. 83 *supra*). Secular buildings have also yielded horse remains. In 1895, when Colonel Stanley Scott was taking up the ground floor of a house in North Devon, he discovered, laid in order and well preserved, the skulls of eight horses and ten bullocks[3]. In Wharfedale, again, under the floor of a house, probably from two to three hundred years old, the workmen took up the skulls of seven horses and a cow[4]. With these discoveries one naturally associates the Dutch and German customs already mentioned (p. 440 *supra*). And, of course, the primitive idea must be connected with that which underlies foundation sacrifices, although complication arises from the unique merit attached to skulls. The foundation sacrifice is widely prevalent, but the burial of skulls is a more specialized custom.

It will be noticed that, of the last two examples, one is recent, and the other comparatively recent, therefore any folk-memory associated with the deposition of the skulls was probably defective. According to popular belief in Ireland, the skulls which are nowadays placed under buildings are intended to "cause an echo." Just as a public building has, or has not, a horse's skull buried beneath it, so will it be good or bad for the

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Ser., V. p. 274.

[2] *Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, N.S. III. 1897, pp. 89–103, 192–206.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., VIII. p. 248.

[4] *Ibid.* Additional instances are given in *Folk-Lore*, XII. 1901, pp. 348–9.

purpose of hearing. A certain field which possessed a good echo was commonly believed to have a horse interred in it; the tradition was sound, but it is not known whether the horse was buried for that purpose[1]. Why, it may be pertinently asked, does a field need a good echo?

On broad grounds, it is sufficiently obvious that the sacrificial idea preceded the economic, yet there must have been a period of overlapping. For not only was some variation of the custom observed, as we shall see, by Mediaeval church builders, but the practice was kept up until our own days. Noticeably has this been the case in the Scottish Presbyterian Church[2]. When the old Bristol Street meeting-house, in Edinburgh, was being demolished a century ago, eight horse skulls were found concealed in the sounding-board of the pulpit[3]. Less than half a century back, the same class of object was put under an organ in a parish church in the province of Munster to increase the effect of the music[4].

The modern theory of the acoustic purpose of the skulls fades as we trace the custom to more remote times. A small chamber in the belfry of Elsdon church, Northumberland, appeared to have been built specially to contain three horse skulls, which had lain piled against each other for hundreds of years[5]. The masons of old time doubtless imagined that the skulls would make the tones of the bells more resonant, but, "lulled in the countless chambers of the brain" there must have been almost-forgotten memories of these traditional talismans. These sacred and oracular heads, there can be little question, were built into heathen temples before the dawn of history, and the habit was passed on from one generation to another[6]. Does this theory seem far-fetched? Consider the conditions at Elsdon. Here is a district teeming with earthworks and other British and Roman remains. The population is scanty, the moorland wild and pathless; there was, until recently, little inter-communication among the scattered folk. Hereditary custom held firm sway.

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., III. p. 564.

[2] Sir G. L. Gomme, *Folk-Lore Relics in Early Village Life*, 1883, pp. 34–7. (Other examples given.)

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser., IV. p. 66.

[4] *Ibid.* 4th Ser., III. p. 500.

[5] *Ibid.* 6th Ser., I. p. 424.

[6] Grant Allen, *Evol. of the Idea of God*, p. 122.

Such was the preference for burial in Elsdon churchyard, that corpses were carried many miles over the moors for interment. Yet pagan customs were rife. Well-worship was carried on here until our own times, and not many decades have passed since cattle were driven through the Midsummer bonfires to ward off disease. How much stronger was superstition when the village church of Elsdon was first built! There must have been dark, undisturbed depths of paganism in the lives of the countryfolk. We really know little of the true beliefs of the Mediaeval peasant, as recorded by himself. Even our information about the faiths held by the official classes, though somewhat exiguous, reveals a basis of gross superstition. The gap between the twentieth century and the sixteenth is almost immeasurable as compared with that between the sixteenth century and the Neolithic period.

Let us halt, to draw a comparison from Brittany. Who, in the absence of direct evidence, would have imagined that, in our own generation, a people, nominally Christian, could have been found to set out dishes of cream for the dead on All Souls' Eve, to employ grave-earth for the cure of fevers, to pour out milk on tombs as a libation, to anoint menhirs with oil and honey, to scatter the ashes of the festival fires over the fields to ensure a fat harvest? Yet all these customs have been practised by the Bretons in recent times. Well-worship, the blessing of oxen at Carnac, the ghastly reverence paid to images personifying Death, and all such rites, we pass by, as being everywhere somewhat persistent. The parallel which I wish to draw is between the Mediaeval Englishman and the more modern Breton. Could we turn back and thoroughly understand the pages of history, I am convinced that even the seventeenth century peasant of the English Cornwall, for example, would be found quite as superstitious as the nineteenth century peasant of the French Cornwall. What is true of Cornwall, holds good for the Highlands of Scotland, for Ireland and Wales, and, in a lesser degree, for the whole of rural England.

To return: the acoustic idea had its birth so far back as Roman times at least, though at that period it was associated with the use of sounding jars. Probably horse skulls were still buried sacrificially, but the purpose was being forgotten. The

belief in the efficacy of horse skulls as reverberators seems to have been derived from the employment of these jars, at a rather later time when the sacramental idea concerning skulls was obsolete. About the jars themselves there has been a vast controversy, which, even at the risk of being discursive, we must briefly notice.

To take a Roman example first: along the seats of the Coliseum there was a peculiar arrangement of horizontal pots, which Sir E. Beckett (Lord Grimthorpe) believed were intended to augment the sound. As a result of experiment, this authority found that the vessels acted much in the same way as would a series of short, wide tubes, if presented to a hemispherical bell when this was struck[1]. Vitruvius mentions brazen vessels, perhaps comparable to the gong or kettle-drum, as being in use in Roman theatres. Some writers have thought that the purpose was to make the voices of the actors more distinct, others consider that the vessels were accessories in the imitation of thunder.

Coming to Mediaeval times, we find that the church of the Celestins at Metz was furnished (A.D. 1439) with jars, expressly to improve the chanting, but it is affirmed that experience showed them to be useless. Mr Gordon M. Hills, in a valuable paper on this subject, says that the jars were "a great disfigurement to the building, the marvel of all beholders, and the jest of fools[2]." There are other Continental records of acoustic jars from Strasburg, Angers, Paris, and other places. L'Abbé Cochet discovered numerous specimens in the churches of Upper Normandy, together with "cornets" of baked earth in the church of St Blaise, at Arles. Illustrations of some of these are given in Cochet's paper in the *Gentleman's Magazine*[3], and the statement is made that similar "cornets" are found in the interior walls and vaults of many churches in Sweden, Denmark, and Russia[4]. Didron, after referring to specimens from the two first-named countries, and to those discovered at Arles and Metz, decides against the acoustic hypothesis: "*Ce mode* [*d'acoustique*]

[1] Sir E. Beckett, *Book on Building*, 2nd edition, 1880, p. 281.

[2] G. M. Hills, in *Jour. Archaeol. Assoc.*, XXXV. p. 97.

[3] L'Abbé Cochet, in *Gentleman's Magazine*, N.S., XV. pp. 540–3.

[4] For confirmatory evidence, see E. E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'Architecture française du xi^e^ au xvi^e^ siècle*, 1865, s.v. "Pot" (t. VI. pp. 471–2).

me semblait aussi puéril qu'inefficace[1]." And, seeing that the men of the Middle Ages made bells and organs so commonly, why, he asks, are not the sounding "poteries" of more frequent occurrence[2]?

In England, notable finds of jars are on record, though the number of churches concerned is but a trivial percentage of the whole. At St Clement's, Sandwich, the jars were built into the walls of the chancel, overlooking the altar[3]. At Barkway, Hertfordshire, they were likewise embedded in the chancel wall, but on the floor level[4]. They are also found in the thickness of the wall, a few inches below the floor level, as at Fountains Abbey, where they had been placed at the base of the old choir screen. The Fountains vases lay on their sides, and both in and around them there was an abundance of charcoal. The charcoal, it is conjectured, may have had no more mysterious origin than a fire which occurred at the Dissolution[5]. Jars, supposed to be of Romano-British make, were found on the top of the chancel wall at East Harling, Norfolk; in each case the mouth of the jar faced the interior of the chancel. For a long time a coating of lath and plaster had concealed these curiosities[6], and one is led to wonder whether other jars may not, even now, lie hidden elsewhere. The gables of Newington church, Kent, yielded three jars. Other records come from Fairwell (Staffs.), Denford (Northants.), St Peter's Mancroft and St Peter-per-Mountergate in Norwich, Upton, near Newark, and from Youghal, in Ireland[7]. But the greatest collection of all was uncovered at the village church of Leeds, near Maidstone, in 1878. Altogether, about fifty earthenware pots were revealed. They were found on the top of each wall of the nave, below the wall plate. The walls and oaken roof belonged to the fifteenth century. The best judges at first declared that the vessels were of Romano-British manufacture, and dated a thousand years earlier than the fabric.

[1] É. Didron, *Annales archéologiques*, 1862, t. XXI. p. 297.

[2] Didron, *loc. cit.* [3] *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., III. p. 168.

[4] *Bygone Hertfordshire*, ed. W. Andrews, 1898, p. 157.

[5] *Papers read at the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1853–4, pp. 133–4.

[6] *Jour. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1873, XXIX. p. 306; 1879, XXXV. p. 95.

[7] *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., III. pp. 412–3. *Rept Norfolk and Norwich Archaeol. Soc.* 1861, p. iii.

This would seem to indicate that a series of urns had been discovered in the neighbourhood, and pressed into service by the Mediaeval masons. Later expert opinion, however, declares that the jars, though possessing some Celtic characteristics, are of Mediaeval date. The bodies of the jars were cylindrical, and about 8 or 9 inches in diameter, while the mouths narrowed to 3 or 4 inches. The height averaged 10—12 inches. The bottom of each jar was convex and perforated. Mr Hills calls attention to some perplexing general considerations. The jars are of any form and every form, they are old and new, they are placed, as if at hazard, from the floor to the roof. He therefore concludes that the intentions were several, although he does not himself suggest any other purpose to supplement the acoustic theory[1]. In such a matter as this, difference of purpose, variety in underlying belief, changeable custom according to locality, confused folk-memory and tradition, need cause the antiquary no surprise. The prime motive having vanished, the custom is bereft of its full meaning, and the course of development runs along divergent rather than parallel lines. Two other discoveries which seem to favour the acoustic theory may be given—those at Ashburton, in Devon (1838), and Luppitt, also in Devon (1880). The Ashburton jars (Fig. 88 A), though convex at the base, and exhibiting chevron ornament, are assigned not to the Late-Celtic period, but to the close of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. The jars from Luppitt (Fig. 88 B) are comparable to those found at Leeds. They were apparently made especially for insertion in a wall, as they are flattened a little in one portion. They probably belong to the fifteenth century[2].

This question of "acoustic jars" has been dilated upon because it seems to involve an indirect derivative of the skull superstition, and one is induced to outline the story, however roughly and tentatively. We start with a period when the horse cult is rife, and when solemnity is the note of the priest and soothsayer. At a later date, a horse, or among some peoples, an

[1] *Jour. Archaeol. Assoc.*, XXXV. pp. 95 et seqq.; cf. XXXVIII. pp. 218–21; see also XVI. pp. 359–63. There is an interesting article on "Acoustic jars," by G. C. Yates, in *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*, ed. W. Andrews, 1897, pp. 34–43.

[2] *Jour. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 1882, XXXVIII. pp. 218–21.

ox, is slain and buried under the foundations of the pagan temple. By and by, the skull, representing the most mysterious and sacred part of the animal, is considered to be sufficient by itself. Instead of being uniformly hidden under the building, it is built into the wall or placed in a specially constructed recess. The depositories are not confined to one part of the building. At a later date, a purely practical interpretation is assigned to the skulls. Secular architects, or architects not versed in the

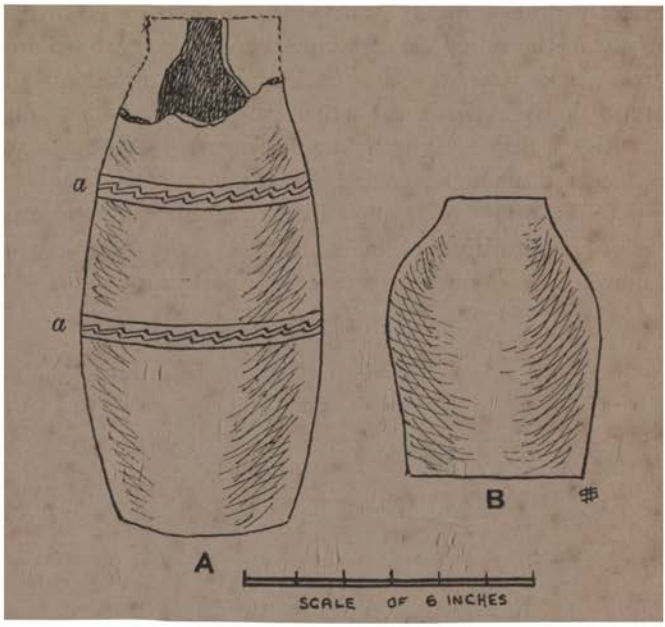

FIG. 88. Acoustic jars.

A. Skittle-shaped specimen from Ashburton church, Devon. The jar is grey, and highly burnt. *a*, *b*, are yellow bands, on which are incised chevrons.

B. Small jar (6″ × 4½″) from Luppitt, Devonshire. It has some of the characteristics of Celtic pottery, but probably belongs to the fifteenth century.

Jour. Archaeol. Assoc. XXXVIII. p. 220.

mystic lore of their heathen fathers, become prone to substitute an urn or a jar for the skull. The early Christians, adapting, it may be, the old pagan site, and actuated either by necessity or diplomacy, at times prudently permit the old rite and custom. The two practices run side by side, but the motive is weak, and ultimately becomes debatable. Then springs up the explanation

that skulls and jars alike are used to produce sonorous beauty, and on this our modern theory is based. Nevertheless, these perversions of the original purpose have not been everywhere co-eval; we have seen, for example, that the architects of the Coliseum had reached the structural stage of the idea, and evidently turned the principle to good account.

Folk-memory weakens according to the degree of civilization and in response to outside influences. As, on the one hand, the imperfectly hollow horse skull is supplanted by jars, vases, and urns; so, on the other, an ox-skull becomes a mere ornament on the frieze of a Roman Doric building. Again, certain builders, apparently misled by the earthenware vessels, and connecting them with traditions or actual experiences of urn-burial, employ a modification of such vessels as pure ornament. The story has several parts. The mingling of the symbolic and the utilitarian idea is difficult to unravel, hence there is room for much speculation, and need for some suspension of final judgement.

CHAPTER XI

"THE LABOUR'D OX"

"Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink't hedger at his supper sate."

Comus, ll. 291–3.

AN easy-going reader, with no taste for agricultural inquiries, might admire the above picturesque lines and then pass on, counting as a trifle what is really a most important feature of early social history—the use of the ox as a beast of draught. Let us pursue the question a little, for, although the spectacle described was apparently commonplace to the poet, yet, to us, a ploughing ox is undoubtedly a rarity. Some two or three teams in Sussex, perchance a similar number in Dorset, and, it may be, an odd team in the West Country, seem to complete the census of working oxen.

By means of personal investigations made in various counties, and by the collection of scattered particulars given in certain periodicals, I have endeavoured to determine at what dates the bullock was discarded as a draught animal. It may be well to give an epitome of the results, premising that what is now an exceptional occurrence was, at no remote period, the general rule, just as it is still the rule in the agricultural districts of Germany, Austria, and Southern France, not to speak of such distant lands as Cape Colony and Ceylon.

Commencing with the "county of broad acres," we find that Arthur Young speaks of having seen many oxen in harness between York and Beverley in the year 1768. Waggons were

drawn by two oxen and two horses; for tillage, oxen alone were deemed more serviceable[1]. A little later, in 1788, Marshall gives a somewhat different testimony. Oxen were still preferred for drawing farm carriages and timber waggons along the roads in the Vale of Pickering, but not a single ox was left at field work[2]. Near Whitby, however, bullocks were attached to the plough so late as 1826[3], and for hauling stones from the quarry, in 1858[4]. A single team was still engaged in quarry work in 1895[5].

Coming to the neighbouring county of Lincoln, draught oxen were still employed near Brigg in 1853[6], and five years later the writer's father saw a plough-team in regular work at North (or Nun) Ormsby, near Louth. The particulars from the Midlands touch more recent times. For Stratford-on-Avon the last recorded year is 1895[7]. A friend noticed a team at work near Oxford, in 1881, and I have a record from Helmdon (Northants), for 1902. At Hockliffe, near Luton, in Bedfordshire, oxen were constantly employed by an eccentric farmer who died so recently as 1909. The feature was, however, admittedly an anachronism: the farmer in question would not use machinery, and was, in other respects, a follower of old-world customs.

The West Country supplies records for the year 1895; in the Vale of Pewsey it is asserted that more ox-teams than horse-teams were seen at the plough in that year, though the ox was not used for road-work. In 1909 I could not find a single team; inquiries showed that the year 1897 or 1898 must have marked the change over, so that either there must have been an abrupt reversal of custom, or, more probably, the statement with respect to the year 1895 was incorrect. There, as in Dorset, red and white Herefords represented the breed most in favour[8]. An eye-witness reports a team from East

[1] Quoted from the 1770 edition of A. Young's *Six Months' Tour through the North of England*, I. pp. 162–3, in *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. p. 266.

[2] W. Marshall, *Rural Econ. of Yorkshire*, 1788, I. p. 261.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. p. 266.

[4] *Ibid.*, 7th Ser., II. p. 354.

[5] *Ibid.*, 8th Ser., VII. p. 470.

[6] *Ibid.*, 7th Ser., II. p. 318.

[7] *Ibid.*, 8th Ser., VII. p. 396.

[8] *Ibid.*, 8th Ser., VII. p. 469.

Ilsley (Berks.), for 1906. During the years 1887–8, I occasionally saw oxen ploughing on the Cotswolds, and, a few years previously, Devonshire farmers still chose bullocks for heavy land.

Labouring oxen were not uncommon in Hampshire and Dorsetshire about twenty years ago. Two oxen were yoked to the plough, while, to increase the speed, a horse was attached as leader. The case of Essex is peculiar. One is bound to believe that bullock labour was formerly as common in that county as elsewhere, nevertheless Arthur Young informs us that the Essex farmers of the eighteenth century ridiculed Lord Clare's introduction of oxen to his estate at Braintree. It was only when the experiment resulted in a great saving of money as compared with the general expenditure on horse-labour that the example was reluctantly copied. Young says that the importation of the oxen from Gloucestershire, where Lord Clare had purchased them "with all their geers," was "a stroke of agriculture most unusual in Essex." On one occasion, a waggon drawn by horses became "sett" in the village. The horses were taken off, "and the oxen clapt too (*sic*), who to the amazement to the beholders, drew it out in triumph[1]." One cannot help thinking that the popularity of horse-labour around Braintree was a chronological inversion, applicable only to a limited area. At whatever period introduced, working oxen remained in the Essex districts of Romford and Ilford until the year 1830[2], and probably later. In the sister county of Kent, bullocks were worked near Tunbridge Wells until the year 1886[3].

It is to the county of Sussex, however, that we must look for the lingering exploitation of ox-labour. During the summer of 1908, remembering what I had witnessed about twenty years previously, I made careful inquiries about the disuse of working-oxen by Sussex farmers. The result proved that two teams at least were still under the yoke, one at Housedean Farm, Falmer, and the other, which I did not actually see, at Itford Farm, near

[1] A. Young, *Six Weeks' Tour through the Southern Counties*, 1769, pp. 73–4.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. pp. 372–3.

[3] *Ibid.*, 7th Ser., II. p. 317. A good description of Sussex oxen is given by W. H. Hudson, in *Nature in Downland*, 1900, Chap. III.

Rodmell, a few miles North of Newhaven. The latter team has now been disbanded. In February, 1910, Dr W. Heneage Legge, of Ringmer, informed me that teams could still be seen daily near Brighton. Later, in August of that year, I found a single team retained—for sentimental reasons, probably—at Exceat New Barn, near West Dean. The Falmer cattle are black, long-horned animals, apparently of Welsh breed. The old Sussex red cattle are no longer employed. The oxen are not shod at the present day, though it is but a few years since the custom was abandoned. This is a point to which we shall return. At Pyecombe and Pangdean, bullocks were last worked, and shod, about eight years since. "A few years ago," was the answer given at Saddlescombe, and again at Sompting. At Steyning, the blacksmith had not shod oxen for twenty years, nor had his brother craftsman of Ditchling treated bullocks for a decade or more. Here the details may stop; it is perhaps well that they should be given, as an aid to the future historian.

But what of the past? For it is practically certain that from the earliest historical times onwards to the eighteenth century the ox was pre-eminently, nay, almost entirely, the beast which was yoked to cart, plough, and harrow. There were, it is true, some exceptions, to be noted in a moment. The old illuminated manuscripts show pictures of oxen only, and the famous embroidery known as the Bayeux "tapestry" furnishes similar evidence. The animals there shown as attached to the plough, whether they represent oxen, horses, or asses, are very different from the finely drawn horses exhibited throughout the rest of the tapestry[1]. Until the eighth century, as was stated in Chapter X., the horse was often used for food, and it was likewise kept for the saddle. Thus we may say that, while the hunter, the warrior, and the pilgrim claimed the horse for riding, the husbandman in the field was content to use the ox for draught.

The language of Domesday Book corroborates the testimony of the early manuscripts. In general, the records of that

[1] W. de Gray Birch, *Domesday Book*, 1887, p. 222; P. H. Newman, in *Social England*, ed. H. D. Traill, 1894, I. p. 214.

remarkable survey indicate that a painstaking assessment was taken of farming stock. The terms used in the minute inventories are extremely suggestive. The amount of land which an ox could till is called an "oxgang" or "bovata" (Lat. *bos, bovis* = an ox + *ata*). A bovata, originally "one ox's worth," was half a "jugum," "a pair's worth" (Lat. *jugum* = a yoke), and a quarter of a carucata (post-classical Latin, *car(r)uca* = a four-wheeled carriage; cf. root *quatuor*, whence the word was later applied to a plough, possibly because it was drawn by four oxen, or, by extension, two yoke of oxen, four abreast)[1]. Recollections of early Mediaeval literature will emphasize the truth of our proposition. In the "Vision of William, concerning Piers the Plowman" (c. A.D. 1377), it was doubtless an ox-team which ploughed the "half-acre." Again, in the writings of Bartholomew Anglicus (cir. A.D. 1260), there is a description of the duties of Bubulcus, the ox-herd. "He feedeth and nourisheth oxen, and bringeth them to leas and home again; and bindeth their feet with a langhaldes [M.E. *langelen* = to bind together; *langel, lanzel* = a rope or hopple] and spanells [= fetters; cf. Germ. *Spannseil* = a tether] and nigheth and cloggeth them while they be in pasture and leas, and yoketh and maketh them draw at the plough: and pricketh the slow with a goad, and maketh them draw even. And pleaseth them with whistling and with song, to make them bear the yoke with the better will for liking of melody of the voice." The oxen not only "ear" (= plough) the ground, but thresh the corn by treading: Bartholomew also speaks of their use in "treading the flour[2]." The trivial round of the ox-herd's labours may be completed from an Old English dialogue of the eleventh century, in which the garthman is made to say: "I stand over [the oxen], waking against thieves: and then again in the early morning I betake them, well filled and watered, to the plowman[3]." A like story is told in the anonymous "Seneschaucie," or "The Office of Seneschal" (*temp.* Edw. I.), wherein it is stated that ox-herds must sleep with

[1] Another probable mode was to employ four yoke of two each.

[2] Bartholomew Anglicus, *Mediaeval Lore*, ed. R. Steele, 1905, p. 143. For "langhaldes," see *Cent. Dict.*; for "spanells," *Eng. Dial. Dict.* and Funk's *Standard Dict.* (1906), s.v.

[3] *Social England*, ed. H. D. Traill, 1894, I. p. 128.

their oxen to guard them[1]. If we pass by a few centuries, we get, in a passage from Shakespeare, an allusion to the traffic in draught oxen at the great fairs of England. Shallow inquires of Silence, "How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair[2]?" And moving forward again, we have Robert Burns singing thus:

> "And owsen frae the furrow'd field
> Return sae dowf [=slow, heavy] and wearie O[3]."

In short, through all the centuries down to the middle of the eighteenth, it might have been affirmed, in the words which Richard Carew used of his own county of Cornwall: "For meate, draught, and plowing, Oxen; for carriage and riding, horses[4]."

But there must have been exceptions, perhaps even a little more numerous than the foregoing paragraph would seem to imply. Fitzstephen, who, about the year A.D. 1174, wrote a short account of the city of London, describes a market at which one could buy all kinds of commodities, and he remarks, incidentally, "*Stant ibi aptae aratris, trahis, et bigis equae*" (There stand the mares, fit for the plough, the sledge, and the cart)[5]. Letters written in A.D. 1222 to Ralph de Nevil, Bishop of Winchester, contain repeated requests for "mares to draw the carts" which were to convey marl to the fields[6]. The employment of mares for draught is directly at variance with their early heathen allocation to the priestly body, one instance of which was given on p. 436 *supra*. This old usage does not, of course, imply that all mares were reserved for the priests: moreover, traditions respecting such animals were doubtless fading away. But to return to our subject: the evidence

[1] *Seneschaucie*, reprinted with Walter de Henley's *Le Dite de Hosebondrie*, tr. E. Lamond, 1890, p. 113.

[2] *King Henry IV.*, 2nd Pt, Act iii. Sc. 2.

[3] R. Burns, *My ain Kind Dearie O*, v. 2.

[4] R. Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*, 1769, p. 23.

[5] Fitzstephen's *Descrip. of the City of London*, ed. by "An Antiquary" [S. Pegge], 1772, pp. 39, 70. Cf. Translation by H. Morley, in his edition of Stow's *Survey of London*, 1890, p. 27. See also P. Vinogradoff, *Eng. Society in the Eleventh Century*, 1908, p. 154.

[6] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Ser., II. p. 195. Cf. *Piers the Plowman*, VI. 289–90: "and a cart-mare to drawe a-fielde my donge."

adduced is sufficient to prove that horses were partly employed in agriculture during the Norman and Plantagenet periods. Moreover, Walter de Henley, writing not later than A.D. 1250, advised the farmers of his day to plough with two oxen and two horses, "if the ground is not so stony that the oxen cannot help themselves with their feet" (*si la tere ne seyt si perouse ke buefs ne se pussent eyder des pes*)[1]. As already noted, this plan was followed in Yorkshire, Hampshire, and Dorsetshire until modern times. When all exceptions are allowed for, however, the broad fact remains, that the bullock was the main beast of draught during the earlier periods of English history. Even in the Yorkist and Lancastrian periods, horses, we are assured, were hardly ever used for field-work[2]. They carried corn to the mill or the market on their backs[3], and they served the packman on his journeys through the country. In the fields the ox was master.

Concerning the number of oxen which were grouped to form a team, usage has varied. The Domesday terms bearing on the subject have caused much controversy. Canon Isaac Taylor argued that eight oxen made up the team[4]. This view is supported by Dr J. H. Round, and, to some extent, by Professor Vinogradoff and Professor Seebohm. The last-named authority believes that eight oxen, yoked four abreast, made up the full manorial plough-team at the time of Domesday, as well as in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He admits, however, that the villains had apparently smaller ploughs, with about four oxen to the team (Fig. 89). He also cites records to show that, occasionally, the plough-team consisted of ten or twelve oxen. Mr W. de Gray Birch contends that the number was four, and that four bullocks were the equivalent of two horses[5].

[1] *Le Dite de Hosebondrie*, p. 11.

[2] W. J. Corbett, in *Social England*, II. p. 545. Note, however, that towards the end of the sixteenth century (A.D. 1577) William Harrison, in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, speaks of "our cart or plough horses (for we use them indifferently)," Bk III. c. 1 (edition 1807, I. p. 370).

[3] W. L. Rham, *Dict. of the Farm*, new edition, 1858, p. 202.

[4] On this theory, a bovate represents one-eighth of a carucate.

[5] Birch, *Domesday Book*, pp. 225–6. For contrary view, see J. H. Round, *Feudal England*, 1909, pp. 35–36. Dr Round argues that not only was the *caruca* a plough team of eight oxen, but that the number was fixed. Also P. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, 1892, pp. 252–3. The number of oxen was perhaps partly

Fortunately, there are precise statements extant respecting the Mediaeval practice. In the Cartulary of Rievaulx Abbey (founded A.D. 1132) eight is given as the number of the full team or "draught": "I[i]dem etiam monachi habebunt in eadem pastura quatuor carrucatas boum, unamquamque de viii bobus[1]." A team of eight was also known on the high road, as we learn from the rhyming *Life of St Cuthbert* (c. A.D. 1450). We find the following description of the conveyance of a huge beam to Durham Abbey:

"It was of eight oxen dragh*t* (=draught),
It was in a wayne wragh*t*[2]" (=worked, put).

This quota was, however, often exceeded. A great bell, cast in London, was brought to Durham on a truck:

"Oxen twenty and twa
War drawand this bell full thra[3]" (=vigorously).

FIG. 89. Ploughing in the eleventh century. From MS. Anglo-Saxon Calendar, early eleventh century. (Strutt.) It will be observed that the team consists of four animals. Other illuminated manuscripts also tend to support Mr de Gray Birch's theory.

By a curious coincidence, twenty-two was the strength of the ox-teams which formerly drew timber along the proverbially wretched roads of Sussex[4]. Mr R. E. Prothero tells us that

dependent upon the practice of co-aration, or co-operative ploughing. See G. Slater, in *Geogr. Jour.*, 1907, XXIX. p. 39. P. Vinogradoff, *Eng. Society in the Eleventh Century*, 1908, pp. 154, 164–5. See also F. Seebohm, *Eng. Vill. Community*, 1896, pp. 62–5, 74, 85, 123.

[1] Publications of Surtees Society, No. 83, p. 65.

[2] *Ibid.*, No. 87 (*Life of St Cuthbert in Eng. Verse*), p. 170. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[4] G. Roberts, *Social Hist. of the People of the Southern Counties of England*, 1856, p. 487. Cf. D. Defoe, *Tour thro' the whole Island of Great Britain*, 1724, I. pp. 59–60. Timber taken by road from Sussex to Maidstone, and thence by river to Chatham, sometimes required three years for the journey.

in the eighteenth century from eight to ten went to a plough. A trace of these large teams may be seen, he asserts, in the old crooked ridges visible on grass lands. The enormous length of the team, together with the use of unwieldy ploughs, necessitated the allowance of a vast width of head-row on which to turn (Fig. 90), hence there was a marked deflection or curvature of the furrow[1]. The furrow, in fact, took the form of a flat reversed S[2]. The Lincolnshire tradition says that only the tops of the ridges were cultivated, and that the oxen were attached to each

FIG. 90. Sussex oxen: showing the wide space required when turning the headland, with a team of six.
"Thou art not for the fashion of these times."
(*As You Like It*, Act II. Sc. 3.)

end of a long pole, which stretched across the "land." Thus yoked the animals walked along the grass in the furrow. How the ridges and furrows were originally formed we are not told. Rham says that the old-fashioned plough was drawn by six oxen, and that barely half an acre was turned in a summer's

[1] R. E. Prothero, in *Social England*, v. p. 455. Cf. N. J. Hone, *The Manor and Manorial Records*, 1906, pp. 41–3. See Addenda, p. 497 *infra*.

[2] Birch, *Domesday Book*, p. 225.

day[1]. Youatt recommended two pair of oxen to a plough; he considered the ancient method of using four pair unnecessary[2]. The modern Sussex team commonly, but not always (Fig. 91), consists of six or eight oxen. Eight was also the usual number in Northumberland. Something, of course, depended upon the mode of harnessing the animals. A case is recorded, in which a country clergyman, departing from the common practice of attaching bullocks to the plough by means of a yoke, adopted Arthur Young's advice and used collars, with the result that five oxen, harnessed according to the latter mode, would do the work

FIG. 91. Ploughing on the Sussex Downs: a team of four.

of eight in yokes (i.e. paired), with equal ease[3]. The yoke which was used in Sussex until quite recent years was a curved wooden beam about 5 feet long, 4 inches thick, and 6 inches deep. Near the extremities were light oval hoops made of ash, about 1½ inches in thickness. These hoops passed round the necks of the oxen, and then went through the thickness of the

[1] Rham, *Dict. Farm*, p. 202.

[2] W. Youatt, *Cattle, their Breeds, Management, and Diseases*, new edition, 1876, p. 42.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser., VII. p. 470.

yoke[1]. One of these yokes lay outside the blacksmith's shop at Rodmell, when I visited the village in 1910. Through the kindness of Dr W. Heneage Legge, I am enabled to give an illustration of a Sussex ox-yoke (Fig. 92). A Lincolnshire specimen, over a century old, now in the Museum at Louth, is shown for the sake of comparison (Fig. 93). In Fitzherbert's time (A.D. 1534) the hoops were known as ox-bows. It would appear, from a casual remark made by Rham, that the yoke was

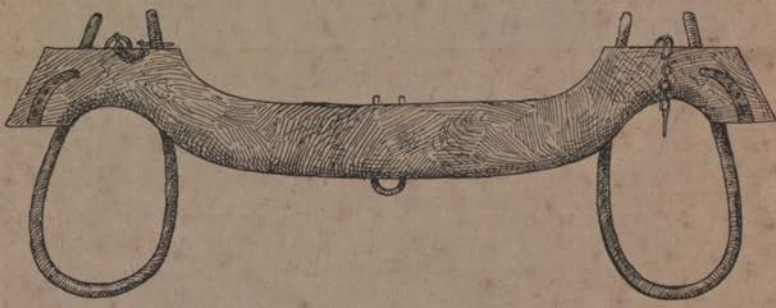

FIG. 92. Ox-yoke (Sussex). *Reliquary*, XI. p. 222. *Dimensions*: length 5 ft; thickness 4″; depth 6″. The loops (ox-bows), which are of ash, are about 1½ inches thick.

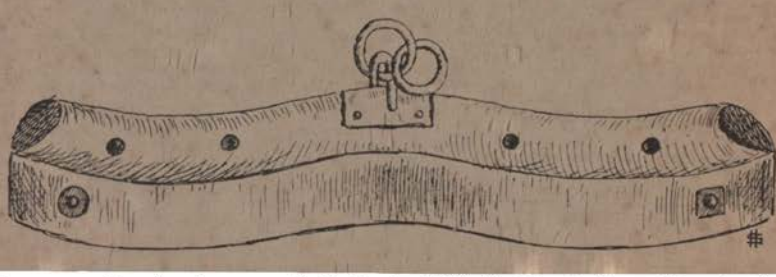

FIG. 93. Ox-yoke (c. A.D. 1800), Gayton-le-Wold, Lincolnshire. Now in the Museum of the Louth Antiq. and Nat. Soc. The material is ash. Length 51½″; breadth 6″; depth 4½″. Ropes, or chains, passing through the vertical holes, appear to have served as ox-bows.

sometimes fixed across the horns[2]. We may note, by parenthesis, that the team sometimes carried bells; one of these was discovered under the ruins of the tower of Ringmer church (Sussex). The tower fell at some period between the fifteenth

[1] *Reliquary*, 1905, XI. p. 223.

[2] Rham, *Dict. Farm*, p. 385.

and seventeenth centuries, and it is supposed that oxen had been employed to remove the fallen stones[1].

Of the various kinds of plough which have been in use for ox-labour, a treatise might be written. What surprises the student most, is the persistent crudeness of these implements down to a very late period. In the grounds of Lewes Castle there is to be seen a specimen of the old Sussex plough (Fig. 94). This dilapidated relic, which belongs to the authorities of the County Museum hard by, is probably a century

FIG. 94. Old Sussex plough and rake, in use about 150 years ago, at Rodmell, near Lewes. Now in the Castle grounds at Lewes.

and a half old, and originally came from Northease Farm, near Rodmell. The plough is 12 feet long, and its two wheels are each about 2 feet in diameter. The hubs and spokes are of wood, and are clumsily fixed to a narrow iron tire, which is circular in cross-section. This feature may be observed to-day in some of the ploughs of the neighbourhood, and the method of attachment of the spokes is nearly as primitive in the modern

[1] *Reliquary*, XI. p. 223.

implements. The mouldboard of this cumbrous old plough is a semi-conical iron-plate, and the coulter—a cutting instrument, according to theory—is a heavy bar of wood with one edge a little narrowed. One may be sure that the Mediaeval plough

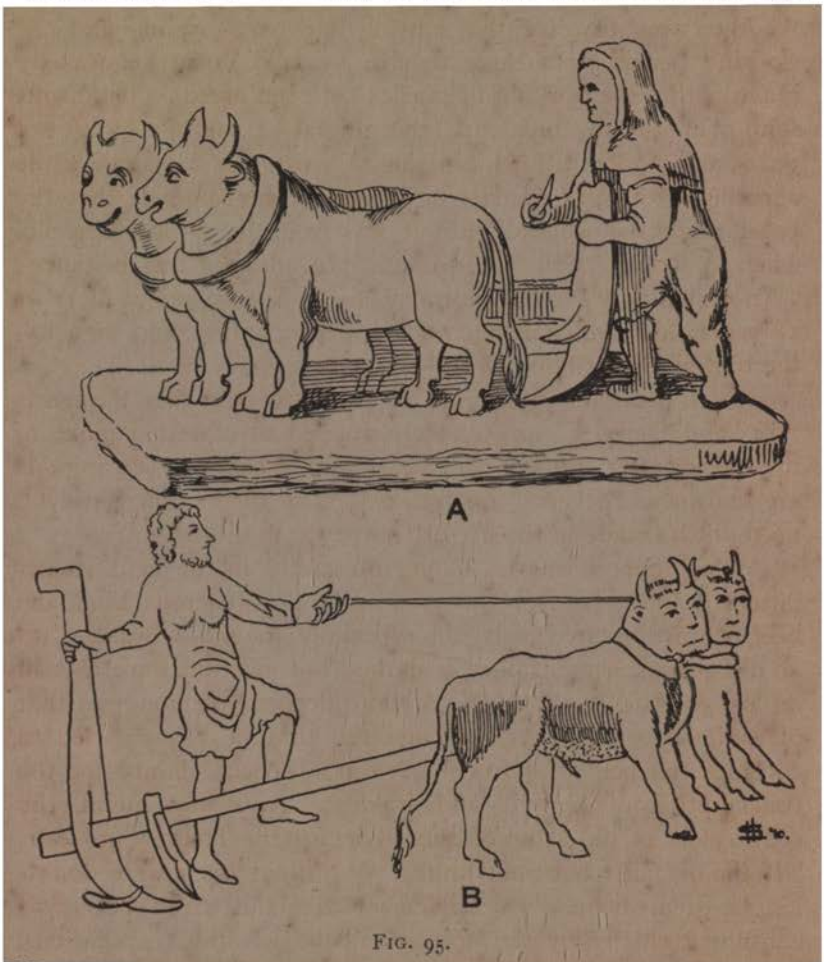

FIG. 95.

A. Bronze, representing Roman ploughman, said to have been found at Piercebridge, Durham. Lord Londesborough's collection. (Wright.)

B. Saxon ploughman. From the Psalter of Eadwine, *temp.* Stephen. (Strutt.)

In both cases the oxen represented evidently belong to a shorthorn breed.

was of still ruder design. The Saxon and Roman ploughs (Fig. 95), drawn by oxen, are of an extremely simple pattern.

Opinions have always differed as to the age when a bullock's services are most valuable. A Sussex steward informed me that the age for commencing work was 4 years, and that the ox would continue to be of use for seven or eight years afterwards. Another account gave the starting age as $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, and the working period from three to five years. Youatt cautiously remarks that the working life varies with the breed[1]. The Yorkshire plan was to "break in" the animal at the age of 2 or 3 years, and work it till it was rising 6 years; but Marshall, while agreeing with the "harness age" just given, contends that the beast might be worked until it was from 15 to 20 years old, when it would be in its prime[2]. He adduces this instance: "An ox which I worked several years in Surrey, might at 17 or 18 years old, have challenged, for strength, agility, and sagacity, the best bred cart-horse in the kingdom."

It will prevent confusion if we pause to note that the terms "ox" and "bullock" are properly applied to castrated males of the species after the age of 4 years; up to that age the animals are known as "steers[3]," or "stirks." The distinction, however, need not be made in the present survey.

When the ox was no longer of service in the field, it was fattened, and, wherever the food was of a generous kind, the beef, we are assured, was not especially tough. "Besides," as an old Sussex peasant once remarked to the writer, "we a'nt all on us got bad teeth, zur." A more decided opinion was that of a Newhaven butcher, who averred that he always used to consider the beef of ploughing oxen a special dainty for the consumption of himself and friends[4]. And in general, the countryfolk of old acted on the advice of the Hebrew proverb: "If the ox fall, whet your knife." Worn-out oxen were doubtless a great boon. In Mediaeval England, fresh beef was consumed chiefly by the nobles and the wealthy corporations, and by them only during a few months of the year. Many bullocks were, indeed, killed and salted in November, when provender had become scarce, but these represented grass-fed cattle. It is estimated that only a very small proportion of the

[1] Youatt, *Cattle*, p. 42.
[2] Marshall, *Rural Econ. Yorks.*, I. pp. 266–7.
[3] Rham, *Dict. Farm*, p. 250.
[4] Cf. *Country Life*, 1911, XXX. pp. 719–20.

whole herd was fattened for the table[1]. Sir Anthony, or as he was termed Maister Fitzherbert, who has already been cited, describes the position of the husbandman very ingenuously: "And if any sorance (= injury, sore, disease) come to an oxe, [and he] waxe old, broysed (= bruised) or blinde, for ii. s. he may be fedde, and thanne he is mannes meate, and as good or better then euer he was. And the horse, whan he dyethe, is but caryin[2]." Horseflesh, in Fitzherbert's day, had long been discarded as human food. (See *supra*, pp. 437–8.)

Among the reasons which led to the selection of the ox, rather than the horse, for dragging the plough or hauling sledges laden with farm produce, was the comparative cheapness of the keep of the former animal. During summer, the ox was mainly fed on grass, which was supplied by the common pasture. Winter found the poor beast living on a scanty diet of straw, with occasional meals of chaff. Therefore the yeoman who had only a few acres of land, with access to a waste or common, or the squire who possessed sufficient pasture to supplement his arable fields, discovered that bullocks formed the more economical team[3]. Rogers estimates that the cost of keeping a horse between October 18th and May 3rd, during which term it could not graze, was nearly four times that of an ox[4]. Again, beast for beast, the bullock was deemed to have proportionately a greater capacity for draught, that is, the strength of an ox was utilized to better advantage when the animal was put in traces, though for carrying burdens the horse was superior. The assumption seems always to have been that two oxen could, in the mean, drag as much as a good cart-horse. Though slow, the ox was surefooted, and on the old, undrained fallows it was invaluable, because its hoofs spread out as it tramped along.

[1] J. E. Thorold Rogers, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, 1889, p. 77. Rham, *Dict. Farm*, p. 203.

[2] A. Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandry* (1534), ed. Skeat, 1882, p. 16. Concerning the academic question whether the *Boke of Husbandry* is the work of Anthony or of John Fitzherbert, see the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, under "Fitzherbert, Sir Anthony"—decision in favour of Sir Anthony.

[3] Rham, *Dict. Farm*, p. 385. Rogers, *Six Centuries*, p. 76. N. J. Hone, *The Manor and Manorial Records*, 1906, p. 81.

[4] Rogers, *Six Centuries*, p. 76.

Not indeed that all breeds of this creature are invariably sluggish. The trotting bullocks of India are familiar to most folk, and Youatt relates that a British ox ran four miles on Lewes racecourse in sixteen minutes[1]. Walter de Henley actually asserts that the ox is as quick at its work as the horse, but the context shows that this statement must be interpreted in a peculiar manner—he is comparing oxen with horses which are "pulled" by sullen, prejudiced workpeople. "Besides," so runs the comment, "a plough of oxen will go as far in a year as a plough of horses, because the malice of ploughmen (*la malyce des charuers*) will not allow the plough [of horses] to go beyond their pace, no more [distance] than the plough of oxen (*aler hors del pas nent ke la charue des buefs*)[2]."

Generalizations respecting such a subject as ox-labour must obviously, however, be accepted under reserve. The problem is not really simple. Arthur Young prepared elaborate tables to show the relative values of ox-labour and horse-labour, as applied to different soils under varying conditions[3]. The balance of opinion, as expressed by Young's calculations, is in favour of the ox[4], but there are some important conclusions in a contrary sense. Fitzherbert anticipated Young's verdict, though his assigned reason seems to indicate that he was parrying a difficult question. "For in some places an oxen-ploughe is better than a horse-plough, and in somme places a horse-plough is better[5]." Oxen are preferable, he tells us, where there exist pastures into which the animals can be put on their return from work. Horses are better when the team has to be "teddered" on leas and balks (= unploughed, grassy strips), though, in practice, strange to say, they were not usually so tethered. A more cogent plea for the bullock is appended to this somewhat weak reason: "And oxen wyl plowe in tough cley, and upon hylly grounde, where-as horses wyll stande st[i]ll[6]." This explanation carries weight, for it is on a steep hill slope that the superiority of the ox-team was always best

[1] Youatt, *Cattle*, p. 42.
[2] *Le Dite de Hosebondrie*, pp. 10–13.
[3] A. Young, *Six Months Tour, N. of England*, 1771, IV. pp. 116–137.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[5] *Boke of Husbandry*, p. 15.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

seen. After the teachings of Jethro Tull, Lord Coke, and James Smith of Deanston, had borne fruit, and farmers had begun to drain their land, the horse came into serious competition with the ox. Even then, however, a cause which had, all along, operated against the horse, continued for some time to exercise a partial influence. This cause lay in the fact that too little attention had been paid to horse-breeding, but so soon as this art began to be practised, and powerful draught horses were, in consequence, developed, the change of system began in earnest. An illuminating piece of evidence was afforded when the transition was taking place in Italy. The husbandmen in the neighbourhood of Rome, copying French and English customs, abandoned ox-labour, but they had not learnt how to rear horses strong enough for heavy field-work, and much cruelty resulted from the change[1].

Another reason for the preference given to cattle requires careful examination. Mr W. J. Corbett, relying apparently on Walter de Henley and Fitzherbert, states that the ox did not require shoeing[2], and that thus expense was saved. It may be doubted whether this cause was ever generally active. The custom of shoeing oxen seems to be very ancient. There is no obvious reason for disbelieving that the iron object found by General Pitt-Rivers at Rushmore, in Cranborne Chase, was, as the discoverer supposed, a Romano-British ox-shoe (Fig. 96 *C*). It was of crescentic shape, widened at one extremity, slightly concave on the upper side, and measured $3\frac{2}{5} \times 1\frac{1}{8}$ inches[3]. There is the possibility, of course, that it was part of a horseshoe, but that alternative is not so likely. The question of the existence of horseshoes in Roman times has been dealt with in the preceding chapter. It must be noted, on the one hand, that other objects of about the same age as the Rushmore example, found in association with Roman remains in ash-pits at Dorchester and Silchester, and in the Cam valley, have been considered

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. p. 317.

[2] W. J. Corbett, in *Social England*, II. p. 545.

[3] Gen. A. L. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase*, 1887, etc., I. p. 84. Figure given on Plate XXVII.

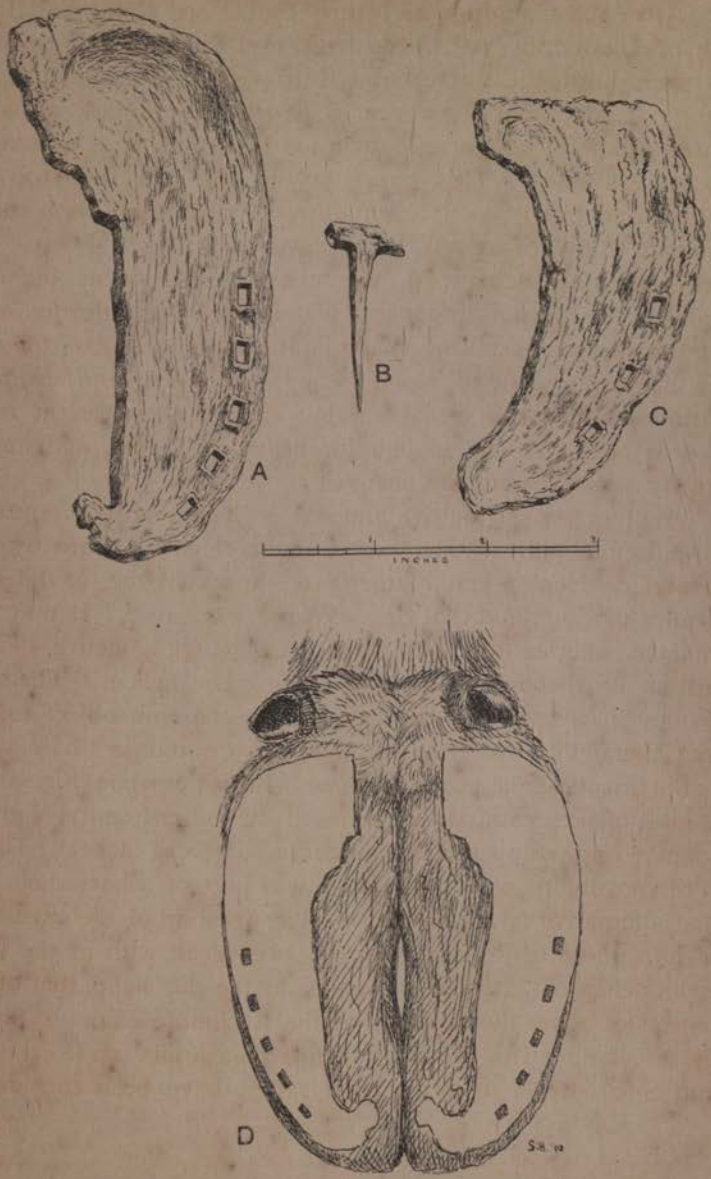

FIG. 96. A. Ox-shoe or "cue," made at Ditchling, Sussex, c. A.D. 1898. B. Nail for fixing shoe. (Author's collection.) C. Ox-shoe discovered by Pitt-Rivers at Rushmore, in Cranborne Chase. D. Ox-shoes in position.

horseshoes[1]. (Cf. details given on p. 424 *supra.*) Against this may be set a few scraps of evidence which support the correctness of Pitt-Rivers's determination—assuming that the two opinions clash—an assumption which must not be made unless one has the opportunity of comparing the various objects. First, we learn from ancient writers like Pliny that the ancients shod, or at least bandaged, the hoofs of injured camels with woven or plaited hemp[2]. They were also often shod with strong ox-leather[3]. (Cf. Information about horseshoes, p. 423 *supra.*) Roman mules, and therefore, presumably, horses and oxen, were shod with iron when they had to cross miry places, or when pomp and display required some ornamentation of the team. The shoes were, indeed, ill-fastened, and were often lost in the stiff clay[4]. If, in view of facts like these, we feel disposed to allow that the Rushmore plate was really an ox-shoe, then there follows a strong presumption that the custom of shoeing bullocks was never altogether given up. That "vis inertia" of social habit, which so impressed Palgrave[5], and the continuity which arose from that condition, are nowhere more noticeable than in the history of agriculture.

We turn to re-examine the Mediaeval authors already mentioned. On their writings, partly, one supposes, Thorold Rogers based his statement that "Oxen were shod, though the shoe is [was] far cheaper than that of the horse[6]." Unless, however, Rogers is basing his assertion on writers other than De Henley and Fitzherbert, whom he frequently quotes, it is obvious that he has misread his authorities. De Henley, in explaining his preference for ox-teams, says that "if the horse

[1] E. Conybeare, *Rom. Brit.* 1903, p. 177 n. (authorities given). W. Ridgeway, *The Origin and Influence of the Thoroughbred Horse*, 1905, p. 504. Cf. T. McKenny Hughes, in *Proc. Camb. Antiq. Soc.*, x. 1904, pp. 256–7.

[2] J. Beckmann, *Hist. of Inventions, Discoveries, and Origins*, tr. W. Johnston, 4th edition, 1846, I. p. 443. Cf. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. xi. c. 105.

[3] Beckmann, *l.c.* This writer, and the authorities whom he quotes, deserve careful study. On the whole, Beckmann sums up somewhat against the theory that horses were usually shod in classical times. This conclusion is in practical agreement with that of Professor Hughes, *loc. cit.* See Aristotle, *Hist. Animal.* l. II. c. 2, § 6.

[4] Catullus, *Carm.* xvii. ll. 25–6. Cf. Beckmann, I. p. 445.

[5] P. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, 1892, p. 15.

[6] Rogers, *Six Centuries*, p. 76.

must be shod" it will cost "each week more or less a penny in shoeing[1]." We may fairly infer, then, that De Henley does not sanction the shoeing of bullocks, and is a little doubtful about horses. Fitzherbert's objection, again, to horse-labour is that the animal must be "well shodde on all foure feete[2]." This assertion, standing by itself, might be taken to imply that cattle were shod on two feet only—the fore ones. All dispute, however, is removed by Fitzherbert himself, a little later; speaking of oxen, he definitely tells us, "And they haue no shoes, as horses haue[3]." Neither can I find any allusion to the shoeing of oxen in "Grosseteste's Rules" (*c.* A.D. 1240), nor in the "Seneschaucie," which was probably written about half a century later.

In spite of this negative evidence, one may be bold enough to suppose that such a careful writer as Thorold Rogers did not go seriously astray in this matter, and that he had somewhere met with references to the custom in Mediaeval works. There exists, in fact, some corroborative testimony, because it is asserted by one who speaks from personal investigation, that in a fifteenth century will, made in the city of York, a certain man is described as an "ox-shoer[4]." This takes us back beyond Fitzherbert's days. Two centuries later than the York evidence, in the years 1666 and 1667, there are clear records of payments for shoeing oxen in the Northern counties[5]. Thus there is a fair case to be put for the prevalence of the custom locally for the last four or five centuries. Evidently not all oxen were shod. Without doubt, too, the practice differed according to the county or district. Recalling, then, the conservatism of agricultural methods, there is a possibility that the custom has never been altogether in abeyance since the Roman period. The evidence against the former shoeing of cattle might be advanced equally to show that horses were not shod, at least, universally. De Henley's "if" indicates that the custom was not without its exceptions, just as some modern equestrians like Mr W. S. Blunt are exceptional in their

[1] *Le Dite de Hosebondrie*, p. 13.
[2] *Boke of Husbandry*, p. 16.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[4] Pub. Surtees Soc., No. 65, p. 250 n.
[5] *Ibid.*, No. 65, p. 250 n.

opposition to the shoeing. Nor is Mr Blunt's doctrine without ancient precedent and parallel among modern primitive folk. The Jews of Palestine, in the time of Isaiah, did not shoe their horses, believing that this breach of custom—if it were indeed a breach—would ensure hoofs "like flint[1]." This was a great advantage in warfare, comparable, in the opinion of the prophet, to the strong man's possession of sharp arrows and chariot wheels swift as the whirlwind. As to present practice, the Arabs, the Tartars, the Gauchos of the Pampas, allow their horses to go barefooted.

Whatever decision we may reach respecting the Mediaeval custom, more recent records, till within the last few years, afford sufficient testimony of the shoeing of cattle which worked on the farm. The animals were also shod when taken long distances to fairs[2]. The Sussex tradition is sound on this point, for old drovers still talk of the former usage. Within the last decade the custom of shoeing has been abandoned, at the time when "the labour'd ox" is itself about to disappear. A Sussex farmer told me (1908) that shoeing is unnecessary, save for bullocks working on the "hard road": if the creature's feet become tender, it should simply be allowed to rest for a day or two. A second authority puts the matter tersely: "Once begin to shoe, and you have to keep on doing it." The operation needed some skill. A rope ("girt" or girth) was placed around the neck of the animal, while another cord embraced one fore and one hind leg. Then, by passing the ropes over a beam—evidently by the aid of a pulley block—the beast was thrown on its back. To prevent struggling, a man sat on the bullock's head and neck. Not unfrequently the long horns would be snapped off by the impact, in such a way that the horn cores and skull were injured. If this were followed by excessive bleeding, the ox had to be slaughtered. Each foot was supplied with two shoes, or, as the Sussex folk term them, "kews," or "cues": "You can't call them shoes, zur; they are like a *q*," and the shape of this letter doubtless

[1] Isa. v. 28. Cf. Smith, *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. "Horse."

[2] T. McKenny Hughes, in *Proc. Camb. Antiq. Soc.*, X. 1904, pp. 256–7. J. J. Hissey, *Over Fen and Wold*, 1898, p. 127.

originated the nickname. The word "cue," as proved by the *English Dialect Dictionary*, is common in the Southern and Western counties. Sometimes only the outer toe of each foot was shod, since the exterior edge was believed to get the greatest strain and pressure. The shoes, as we will continue to designate them, are in the form of a rough crescent, or a comma much widened at the head (Fig. 96 *A*). The nails look like tiny hammers (Fig. 96 *B*). One relic of folk-custom is curious. Before being driven in, each nail was thrust into "a piece of fat pork," the belief being that this made the nail enter the hoof more easily; moreover, if the "quick" were accidentally pierced, the hurt would be speedily healed. One blacksmith declared that he was glad when the shoeing of oxen was given up: he did "not want to shoe any more of the vicious creatures." On the contrary, the aged blacksmith of Ditchling, now long past work, averred that he would rather shoe two bullocks than one horse, although each bullock required eight "cues" with five nails in each (40 nails), as against four horseshoes with 28 nails[1]. But perhaps this worthy, in his retirement, looked back on his bygone labours through the pleasant haze of years, and remembered only the happy occasions.

The Ditchling blacksmith, however, unconsciously had the support of an authority on cattle, Youatt, who, while of opinion that shoeing was a necessary evil, justifiable only because it increased the speed and endurance of the bullock, declared that the task was not difficult. He alludes, adversely, to a contrivance recommended by Bakewell for aiding the blacksmith. This arrangement, the "trevis" (O. French, *traversan*=a cross-beam), was apparently some kind of modification of the cross-beam described by the Sussex blacksmith. In the Vale of Pewsey, the ox was placed in a kind of rectangular cage made by fixing horizontal bars in four uprights. The animal's leg having been fastened to one of the posts, "cueing" was an easy matter—at least, so the Pewsey blacksmith considered. Still another method was to throw the animal on his back, tie his legs, and "hold down his horns with a pitchfork."

[1] The number of nails required for an ox-shoe varied locally. See, e.g., the illustration in Youatt's *Cattle*, p. 569, where three nails only are shown.

Youatt declares that the trevis is dangerous both to the ox and to the smith. What the bullock suffers from is fear, not natural indocility. Therefore prepare the beast gradually for the ordeal. Often handle him, lift his feet, and strike them gently with the hammer. By and by, as he finds that no harm is done, he will most likely submit meekly to the process of real shoeing. Little skill is required on the part of the artisan, but much patience. There is no weakness of particular parts of the hoof, no "corn," no tenderness of the frog, no contraction to be studied. One has simply to fit the metal to the sole. The shoe of the hind foot should be thinner, narrower, and lighter than that of the fore foot; it should also be less curved and more pointed[1].

If we now inquire why the bullock was, little by little, driven from his old position, we may find it partly in the two improvements already mentioned—the drainage of arable lands, and the evolution of the draught horse. Another reason which has been assigned, was the wild condition of the boundary hedges of fields, which, although now usually trimmed and pleached, had been allowed to straggle wastefully and to increase in height. The consequence was that the horns of the cattle often became entangled when the team turned at the headland; where the branches of hedgerow trees hung low, the risk was still greater. The narrow roads and hollow lanes, too, were frequently so overarched with branches and climbing plants that the Craven breed of cattle, whose horns were a yard in length, were in danger of breaking either their horns or their necks[2]. During great heat, Mr Stephen Blackmore informs me, the oxen would often fall exhausted in the furrow, while the horses laboured on. Always, too, in hot weather, there was anxiety lest the team, being attacked by flies, should become ungovernable, and, dragging the plough over ridge and furrow, dash madly for the nearest thicket or pond, to the dismay and peril

[1] Youatt, *Cattle*, pp. 569–70. On the general question, see also T. McKenny Hughes, *loc. cit.*

[2] Marshall, *Rural Econ. Yorks.*, II. p. 182. Arthur Beckett, in *The Spirit of the Downs*, 1909, pp. 285–290, has a good description of a South Down ploughing match, in which oxen competed.

of the ploughman. Such are some of the causes which are supposed to have wrought the revolution, but surely these reasons must have been effective long before the actual change came. Another factor, more operative one would think, was the improvement made in the construction of ploughs, which now became lighter and more manageable. Roads, also, received greater attention. Trackways of soft clay, responsive to the cloven hoof, were superseded by metalled roads and rough causeways of limestone, "in all seasons unfriendly to the feet of oxen[1]." We thus see that it needed a strong set of forces to break the bond of tradition concerning draught oxen. For some decades, it is true, the horse and the ox continued to be allies in farm work, but the partnership was virtually dissolved about the time when the leas were visited by the

"kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Divil's oän teäm."

And now the tradition of working oxen has so nearly vanished that, except in Sussex, it is difficult to glean information on the subject. To begin the search for a cow-shoe is almost like setting out to find the golden fleece. Even more difficult would it be to discover, outside a museum, a specimen of the frame-work, with its set of bells, which was formerly fixed above the yoke. The ox-waggoner of these unromantic times, could we find such a worthy, would tell us that the bells were employed for ornament and for their musical sound: his ancestors, however, would have asserted that the jingling noise kept off witches and persons possessing the "evil eye."

There is, indeed, a considerable amount of folk-lore respecting the ox, but, before examining this, time will not be misspent if we examine the pedigree of the animal.

Most authorities now recognize three species of ox (*Bos*) as having inhabited our island in Pleistocene and recent geological times. We will glance at the three species in order. The European bison (*Bos priscus*) is now found nowhere except in Poland, and need detain us only a moment. This animal had

[1] *Rural Econ. Yorks.*, I. pp. 262–3. Cf. H. M. Neville, *A Corner in the North*, 1909, pp. 247–50.

humps on its withers, and since none of our present breeds of cattle exhibits this feature, the claimant is deemed an impossible ancestor[1]. Next in rank is the gigantic ox, known scientifically as *Bos primigenius*, which was characterised by long curving horns, of which the basal portions lay in a straight line with the top of the skull (Fig. 97 *A*). This beast was

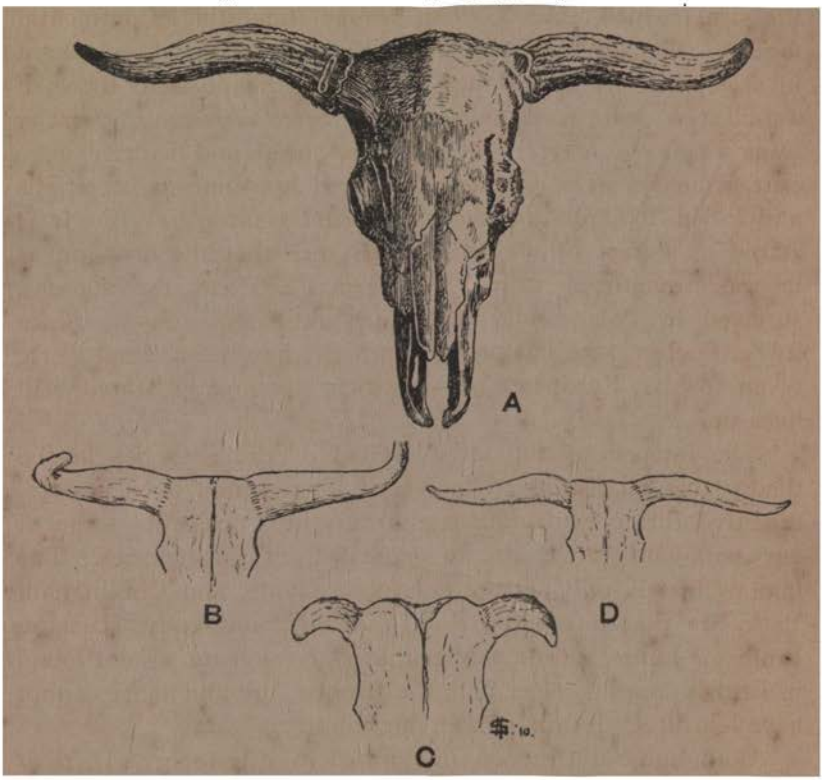

FIG. 97. Skulls of British oxen. **A.** The Urus (*Bos primigenius*), from British Pleistocene deposit (British Museum, Natural History, South Kensington). **B.** Upper portion of skull of the urus, showing the long, curving horns, the bases of which form almost a straight line with the upper skull. **C.** Skull of the Celtic short-horn (*Bos longifrons*), showing the short, stout, downward-curved horns, and the depression in the skull between their bases. **D.** Skull of Chartley bull, one of our Park cattle. This type exhibits the straight-topped skull, a feature not possessed by all the breeds of Park cattle. The outline of the horns is comparable to that seen in the domestic longhorn breed, rather than to the "pitch-fork" arrangement in the Chillingham cattle.

[1] H. E. Forrest, in *Naturalist*, 1908, p. 330.

domesticated in Switzerland in the Neolithic Age, though, in Britain, it seems to have been known only as a wild animal during that period. It had made its appearance in our island in Palaeolithic days, but many writers suppose that it had become extinct here before the Roman invasion. Without much hesitation this animal may be considered identical with the urus which Caesar describes as inhabiting Continental forests. The urus, he tells us, was a little below the elephant in size, while its appearance, colour, and shape were those of a bull (*Hi sunt magnitudine paulo infra elephantos, specie et colore et figura tauri*). Its strength, speed and ferocity were extraordinary. The Germans captured it by means of pitfalls and killed it (*Hos studiose foveis captos interficiunt*)[1]. It is stated as a fact of no little importance that the urus, or, as it was sometimes called by German writers, the aurochs, survived in Poland and Lithuania until A.D. 1627[2]. Since its extinction, the name of aurochs has been improperly given to the European bison, which, as already stated, still lives on.

The interest of the late survival of the urus lies in the theory that all European breeds of long-horned oxen, and indirectly—through introductions from the Continent—some of our semi-wild cattle, are descended from this species. The famous breeds of Chartley (Fig. 98), Lyme, and Chillingham Park, are placed in this list. We say "indirectly," because Professor James Wilson asserts that *B. primigenius* is not found in British deposits latter than the Bronze Age, and hence cannot have left direct descendants in our country.

Wild bulls are, indeed, mentioned in Fitzstephen's *Life of Becket*, as existing near London in the latter part of the twelfth century, though it is extremely doubtful if these were uri[3]. They were more probably more akin to our Park cattle. And one reason for believing that these Park cattle are derived from

[1] Caesar, *De Bell. Gall.*, l. VI. c. 28. The value of this passage is seriously questioned by Professor J. Wilson, in *Evolution of British Cattle*, 1909, Ch. I.

[2] *Naturalist*, 1908, p. 330. Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, Art. "Cattle." Lord Avebury, *Pre-hist. Times*, 6th edition, 1900, p. 286, says that the urus survived in Germany until the sixteenth century.

[3] Lord Avebury, *l.c.*

partially domesticated breeds is their white colour, which, had natural selection been allowed free play, would have tended to bring about their extermination. Moreover, the Park cattle occasionally have black calves; one was born in the Zoological Gardens, London, in 1909. This fact would seem to indicate that the original colour was black. Professor Wilson's theory is, that the Park cattle are the wild representatives of oxen introduced by the Romans. Again, the present feral descendants of the supposed domesticated ancestors are not all

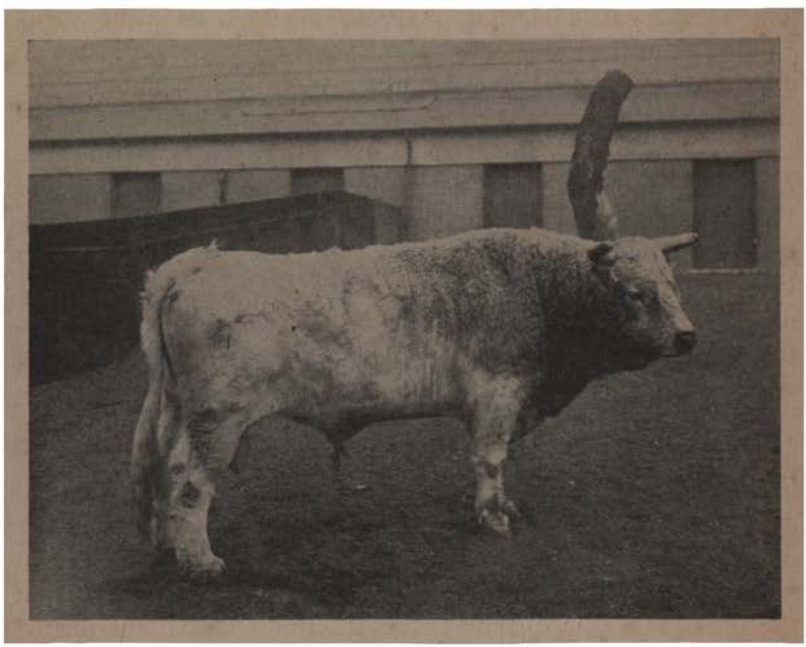

FIG. 98. Wild bull, Zoological Gardens, London; the sole survivor of the (mixed) Chartley herd. Characteristics: white body, long, level back, coarse hair, black muzzle. The horns, which are blackish towards the tips, project slightly downwards and then curve upwards again. (Cf. the horns of *B. primigenius* and *B. longifrons*, Fig. 97 B, C.)

of one type as regards skull and horns, so that the problem is not simple.

Touching the origin of our domestic long-horned breeds, there are two views extant. The first hypothesis is that our long-horns are traceable to the Roman invasion. The Romans had

a tame long-horned ox of a size intermediate between *B. primigenius* and *B. longifrons*, the last named being a smaller breed, to be noticed shortly. This Roman ox was perhaps the result of crossing *B. longifrons* with Italian stock. Alternatively, it may have been a domesticated form of *B. primigenius* itself, which, not having passed through so many generations as later varieties, retained more of the original features—such as the long horns and straight forehead—its size alone being diminished[1]. The other view taken of our long-horned cattle is that of Professor Boyd Dawkins, who, arguing from the occurrence of *B. longifrons* as the only species discovered at the Roman station of Uriconium, credits the Scandinavian invaders with the importation of the long-horned race[2]. Professor Wilson has also strongly argued that the Norsemen brought over our polled cattle. Mr R. Hedger Wallace, in an excellent contribution to this subject, considers that the longhorns may even have been introduced from Holstein and the Low Countries in Mediaeval times[3]. This might be termed a third hypothesis, and, before accepting it, the student should carefully read Professor Wilson's little volume.

We pass to the last of our ancient types, the "Celtic shorthorn" (*Bos longifrons* = *B. brachyceros*), already mentioned as known to the Romans. This smaller ox had an abnormally developed forehead, hence its name *longifrons*. The short horns and the depressed curve of the upper portion of the skull frontal should be compared with the corresponding features in the urus (Fig. 97 *C*). The Celtic shorthorn was domesticated in Britain in the Neolithic period, and during the Bronze Age it was our characteristic, if not our only ox, and occupied this

[1] *Naturalist*, 1908, p. 361.

[2] W. Boyd Dawkins, *Early Man in Britain*, 1880, p. 261.

[3] R. Hedger Wallace, "White Cattle," in *Trans. Nat. Hist. Soc. Glasgow*, v., N.S. Pt 2 (1897–8), pp. 220–273. Mr Wallace gives twenty-one pages of bibliography. This excellent paper may be referred to on many points. J. Wilson, *Evol. of Brit. Cattle*, especially pp. 22–3, 38–40, 61–9, and the whole of Chap. iii. See also R. Lydekker, in *Knowledge*, XXV. pp. 101–2; H. Woodward, *Guide to Fossil Mammals and Birds* (S. Kensington), 8th edition, 1904, pp. 43–4. An article on Park Cattle appeared in *Nature Notes*, IX. 1898, pp. 46–9.

position on the arrival of the Romans. Its remains have been found in vast quantities among the ruined lake-dwellings of Croyland[1], and also in turbaries in various parts of England[2]. In short, if Professor Wilson be correct, this ox represents our original native breed. The ox described by Nilsson under the name of *B. frontosus* is believed to be the same, or a closely allied species[3]. From the black Celtic shorthorn our black cattle of Wales and the Highlands (Fig. 99) are probably

FIG. 99. Highland cattle, Perthshire. These cattle are mixed descendants of the Celtic shorthorn (*Bos longifrons*), they have a shaggy coat, and the horns, which are set widely apart, have a tuft of hair between their bases. The animals shown in the illustration are of a tawny-brown colour.

derived, though inter-breeding has doubtless much diminished the purity of the strain. It is curious to find that *B. longifrons* is, by some, supposed to have been originally a stunted variety of *B. primigenius*. Actual crossing of the breeds is unproved.

[1] Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, Art. "Cattle." Cf. J. Wilson, *Evol. of Brit. Cattle*, p. 17. (The view taken is in harmony with that of Professor T. McKenny Hughes.)

[2] H. A. Nicholson, *Manual of Palaeontology*, 3rd edition, 1889, II. p. 1352.

[3] *Ibid.*, 3rd edition, 1889, II. p. 1352.

The larger animal, it is believed, became locally dwarfed by unfavourable environment, and was hence more easily subjugated by Neolithic man[1].

Once having tamed the ox, early man soon used it for purposes of haulage and carrying burdens. The paintings on ancient Egyptian sepulchres, which go back nearly to the days of polished stone implements, exhibit several breeds of the ox tribe, both bearing the yoke and drawing the plough[2]. Again, Dr T. Rice Holmes cites authorities to show that an ox drawing a plough is depicted on rock-carvings in Scandinavia[3]. And that the animal was used as food there is abundant testimony afforded by the nature and condition of the bones unearthed from barrows and primitive settlements.

With the position of the ox in prehistoric times is intimately connected its status in folk-lore and history. At once, however, we notice that the ox has not here played such a prominent part as the horse. With regard to sacrifice, Jacob Grimm sums up the case by the axiom that agricultural nations have leaned more towards bovine, and warlike peoples towards equine sacrifices[4]. We may accept this as a general tendency, but perhaps not more. Among the Greeks and Romans, indeed, bullocks were the favourite victims[5]. It will be remembered, too, that the Philistines, when about to send back the Ark of Jehovah to the Israelites, selected for the purpose two milch kine which had never been subjected to the yoke. These kine were offered as a burnt-offering by the jubilant Israelites when the end of the journey was reached[6]. In Sweden, almost down to the time of Grimm (b. 1785, d. 1863), there existed cattle known as "God's cows." Grimm sagaciously hints that the term had its origin when such animals were claimed as priestly dues[7]. One is inclined to trace the expression further, namely, to the days of real sacrifices. Among the old Norse and Alamannic tribes the sacrifice of oxen was

[1] H. A. Nicholson, *Manual of Palaeontology*, 3rd edition, 1889, II. p. 1352. *Naturalist* 1908, p. 332.

[2] N. Joly, *Man before Metals*, 4th edition, 1887, p. 268.

[3] T. Rice Holmes, *Anc. Brit. and the Invas. of Jul. Caesar*, 1907, p. 152 n.

[4] J. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, tr. J. S. Stallybrass, 1883, IV. p. 1302.

[5] *Ibid.*, l.c. [6] 1 Sam. vi. *vv.* 7 et seqq. [7] *Teut. Myth.*, IV. p. 1302.

a custom which was eradicated with great difficulty. A letter written to St Boniface (died A.D. 755) speaks of ungodly priests who offered bulls and he-goats to heathen deities (*qui tauros et hircos diis paganorum immolabant*)[1]. Gregory the Great, in a letter to the Abbot Mellitus (A.D. 601), uttered a like complaint against the Angles: "*Boves solent in sacrificio daemonum multos occidere*[2]." The horns of cows intended for sacrifices were bedecked with garlands[3], somewhat in the manner of the Swiss cows which are adorned with ribbons by their herdsmen. To witness the inveteracy of custom concerning the cult of the ox, it is only necessary to cross over to Brittany at the period of the great religious processions. Notably, one should get a glimpse of the display made during the "Pardon" of St Cornély at Carnac. At that period cattle are driven many miles to be sprinkled with holy water at a sacred well. Such farmers as can afford the gift, present an ox as an oblation to the Church. As soon as the animal has been blessed, it is led away to be sold by auction, the money being delivered to the church authorities. Until about a century ago, at Clynnog in North Wales, cattle were similarly offered to St Beuno. Apparently, both in Wales and Brittany, a Christian saint had supplanted a pagan deity. Indeed, at a Roman villa in Carnac, Mr James Miln dug up the votive image of an ox—a suggestive discovery[4].

There is another phase of the ox's domination—that connected with the soothsayer. The ancient Cimbrians swore oaths over a brazen bull[5]. In Hindoo folk-lore, the bull appears in the ceremonial associated with childbirths, weddings, and funerals[6]. In ancient Rome, as is familiar to most readers, the ox figured in oracles. Speaking with a man's voice, the beast gave dire warnings, such as that which bade Caesar beware the Ides of March[7]. White oxen were sacrificed to

[1] *Ibid.*, I. p. 49.
[2] Bede, *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, l. I. c. 30.
[3] *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 665.
[4] S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Brittany*, 1901, pp. 231–3.
[5] *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 664.
[6] A. de Gubernatis, *Zoological Mythology*, 1872, I. p. 258. The whole of Chap. I, Section 5, will repay attention.
[7] *Zool. Myth.*, I. p. 247.

Jupiter, and black ones to Pluto. The black ox was therefore deemed accursed, a herald of ill-luck. In this superstition lies the explanation of such a proverb as, "The black ox has trodden on his foot," allusions to which are found in old writers like Thomas Tusser and Heywood the dramatist. Perhaps of more interest to us is Kemble's statement that there are records of bulls having been used for divination in England[1] (p. 435 *supra*). In the Bronze and Early Iron Ages oxen were frequently sacrificed at graves when interments took place, as indicated by the prevalence of bones and teeth in the mounds. It is supposed that the animals formed part of the funeral feast. Ox skulls (*B. longifrons*) are recorded from many round barrows of the Aeneolithic (Copper-Stone) and Bronze period[2]. But more remarkable was Sir R. Colt Hoare's discovery, in a barrow near Amesbury (Wilts.), of the skeletons of two children, each resting on the head of a cow. The animal appeared to have been of small size. The head of one child lay to the East, that of the other to the West[3].

There will perhaps be always some doubt as to which animals were used by prehistoric folk as daily food, and which were eaten only on ceremonial occasions. It seems probable that the earlier peoples did not commonly eat beef. Contrariwise, there is good evidence to show that horseflesh was much sought after, and we have seen how strong was the later tradition and how difficult it was to destroy it. Pliny relates the case of a man who was brought before the Roman people, and condemned to exile, for having killed an ox for purposes of food. The grave part of the offence was that the wretch had slain the beast—the partner in man's labours—with as little compunction as he would have killed one of his own peasants[4]! And Virgil instances the eating of oxen (*juvenci* = young

[1] J. M. Kemble, *The Saxons in England*, 1876, II. p. 429.

[2] Greenwell, *British Barrows*, pp. 168, 230. References are also given to Bateman's discoveries of ox skulls in Derbyshire barrows. J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches*, pp. 9, 10, 18, 22, etc. A barrow near Bridlington yielded a dagger-knife of bronze, with two plates of ox-horn, of which the hilt had been composed (Evans, *Anc. Stone Impts*, p. 265).

[3] R. Colt Hoare, *Anc. Hist. of South Wilts*, 1812, I. p. 199.

[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. VIII. c. 70.

bullocks) at banquets as a sign of degeneracy, and as not having existed in the Golden Age[1]. Other classical writers give utterance to a like misgiving. This tradition of a "Golden Age" was probably an instance of subconscious recollection of the pastoral stage of society.

Honour, therefore, was reserved for the ox. Labour did not diminish its dignity. But since wealth sprang from labour, whether of man or beast, the Athenians did not deem it amiss to stamp the figure of an ox upon their coins[2]. Yet the Athenians, Professor Frazer tells us, were accustomed to sacrifice the ox with elaborate ritual as the representative of the spirit of vegetation. The sacrifice was known as "the murder of the ox" (*βουφόνια*). Apart, too, from actual sacrifice, there was a mysterious virtue imputed to the animal. Thus, the Egyptian reverence for cows, which were regarded as embodiments of Isis, and which were never killed, has been fully established by Professor Frazer, who attributes the worship to either the pastoral or the agricultural stage of Egyptian development. The kings of Northern Europe were accustomed to take with them, when set on great enterprises, one or more sacred cows, to yield a supply of potent elixir that would ensure success[3]. Bulls drew the chariots of Frankish monarchs[4]. At this point, the past is revealed in the present, for Defoe records how he witnessed, near Lewes, the strange spectacle of "an ancient lady of very good quality" being drawn to church in her own coach by six oxen. This was done, however, not from "Frolick or Humour," but from necessity, the roads being so deep and miry[5]. In the same county, too, it was the custom, down to our

[1] Virgil, *Georg.*, l. II. line 537. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, l. VIII. c. 70. For parallel practices see Westermarck, *Origin and Devel. of the Moral Ideas*, II. pp. 330–1, 493, 494.

[2] W. Smith, *Dict. Greek and Roman Antiq.*, Art. "Nummus." For the Athenian sacrifice of the ox, see J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, II. pp. 38, 39, 41; and for the sacred cattle of Egypt, see II. pp. 59–61.

[3] Grimm, *Teut. Myth.*, II. p. 665. [4] *Ibid.*, II. p. 664.

[5] D. Defoe, *A Tour thro' the whole Island of Great Britain*, 1724, I. p. 60. It will be well to note the reference, since the passage is incorrectly ascribed to other writers. G. Roberts, *Soc. Hist. of the S. Counties of England*, 1856, p. 487, cites Fuller as the author; and Lord Avebury, *Scenery of England*, 1902, pp. 440–7, attributes the statement to Arthur Young. About the close of the seventeenth century, carriage-teams of oxen were popular among Roman Catholics, who were

own days, for a farmer who had employed oxen on his land to be drawn to his burial by an ox-team[1].

The symbolic side of our subject deserves a word or two. The figure of an ox was emblematic of St Luke, and in later times, a similar device was representative of St Frideswide, St Leonard, and St Sylvester[2]. As the ox gradually lost its prestige, and the symbolic was replaced by the secular, fables superseded the older reputable beliefs. All are familiar with the celebrated "Dun Cow," said to have been slain by the doughty Guy of Warwick (cf. p. 199 *supra*). It was about four yards in height, and six in length, with a head proportionately large. As described in the old ballad:

> "On Dunsmore heath I also slewe
> A monstrous wyld and cruell beast,
> Calld the Dun Cow of Dunsmore heath,
> Which many people had opprest.
> Some of her bones in Warwick yett
> Still for a monument doe lye[3]."

The basis of this legend of Sir Guy, according to good authorities, belongs to a period previous to the Norman Conquest.

In Chapter IV. we had occasion to refer to the bones of the Dun Cow. In recalling the story, the subject of inn-signs deserves a moment's notice. The Bull, whether Black, White, or Red, is very popular on tavern sign-boards, but it is a little curious that the Ox is not common, and is, in fact, now becoming rare. The Cow takes the place of the Ox, and is represented as of various colours, Red, White, Brown, Dun, and Spotted. The Wild Bull is met with, to say nothing of the Chained Bull and the Bull and Chain. There is reason to believe that the Ox signs formerly held a more favoured

prevented by the Penal Laws from possessing a horse (Tozer, *The Horse in History*, p. 264). Such a carriage-team was used by Lord Sheffield so late as the close of the eighteenth century (*Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., XI. p. 136). See also E. V. Lucas, *Highways and Byways in Sussex*, 3rd edition, 1907, p. 286, where another instance is recorded from Sussex.

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., II. p. 317.

[2] E. C. Brewer, *Dict. of Phrase and Fable*, under "Ox."

[3] T. Percy, *Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poetry*, ed. H. B. Wheatley, 1891, III. p. 112.

position. In nursery rhymes, the animal was certainly prominent. The cow that jumped over the moon has its fellow in the childish jingles of other lands besides ours. There is also a German counterpart of the bull who tolled the bell when pussy was drowned, for in a twelfth century manuscript the bull is made to read the Gospel over the dead body of the wolf[1]. The tradition that oxen talk in their stalls on Christmas night is old, but is probably post-Christian—there being no likely pagan basis for the story.

We may conclude with a notice of a pleasant custom, once common—the giving of pet names to oxen and cows. Richard Carew (1769) states that Cornish folk were much addicted to the practice: "Each Oxe hath his severall name, upon which the drivers call aloud, both to direct and give them courage as they are at worke[2]." With dairy cows the nomenclature was quite as diversified. Excluding the "fancy names" of the breeder's herdbook, we find such appellations as Whytelocke (in a will *c.* A.D. 1546); Fyll Kytt (A.D. 1551); Cherry and Cherrye (in wills, A.D. 1546, 1585); Shakespeare (A.D. 1793); Fill Bowl and Fill Pan (A.D. 1809)[3]. Such names as Daisy, Damsel, Grizzle and Straighthorn are representative of old Hampshire[4]. Then there are the names made familiar to us in literature, for example, "Jetty," "Lightfoot," and "Whitefoot," of Jean Ingelow, "Brockie" and "Gowans" of Sir Walter Scott[5]. Pet names are still given to milch cows, as Mr Edward Thomas has observed in his *South Country*. Monotonously, persuasively, the cowboy calls, in turn, to such cows as linger to crop the roadside sward: "Wo, Cherry! Now, Dolly! Wo, Fancy! Strawberry! Blanche!" and so on, throughout a pleasant roll-call[6].

But now that the ox no longer drags his burden along

[1] *Zoological Mythology*, I. p. 258.

[2] *Survey of Cornwall*, p. 24.

[3] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., XI. p. 62. R. Southey, *Commonplace Book*, ed. J. W. Warter, 1876, Ser. IV. p. 388.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., XI. p. 236.

[5] J. Ingelow, *High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*, vv. 5, 23. Sir W. Scott, *Heart of Midlothian*, chs. xxxix., xlv. See also *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., IV. p. 466.

[6] E. Thomas, *The South Country*, 1909, p. 129.

the dusty turnpike, he receives no nickname. He is merely merchandise—the subject of transactions between the butcher and the grazier. Not the least lamentable feature in his history is the fact that no one remembers, or cares to remember, his social services in the past. Knowledge of the ox as a toiler of the field has all but departed, and, with oblivion, kindliness perchance has diminished. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn[1]," said the Mosaic law. Nowadays, one hears of Societies whose work, imperatively necessary, consists in watching, with friendly eye, the interests of dumb, driven cattle. It is a little doubtful whether any hardships connected with the use of draught oxen ever exceeded, or equalled, the cruelty which is oftentimes, if reports be true, associated with the lives of fatted kine.

[1] Deut. xxv. 4.

CHAPTER XII

RETROSPECT

WE are now in a position to see whither the lines of our inquiries converge, and to draw a few general conclusions. Since each chapter has been provided with its own summary, the retrospect will not detain us long.

We began by reviewing the facts with regard to the existence of Christian churches on ancient pagan sites. It was soon discovered that the chief testimony was afforded by tangible relics. These objects comprise, on the one hand, rude stone monuments, ancient burial mounds, prehistoric earthworks, and sacred wells, existing in close association with parish churches; and, on the other, of scraps of treasure-trove, such as bones, urns, coins, and implements, thrown up by the spade. The material relics, it is true, did not complete the evidence. A little was learned from place-names, and more, perhaps, from folk-stories concerning the deeds of fairies and witches, giants and demons, who baulked the efforts of the early builders. These traditions, widespread and genuinely spontaneous, are —in whatever way we may choose to explain and interpret them—valuable records of true folk-memory. Our general verdict respecting the sites was that, in many instances, they were originally of pagan selection, although no existing building can be produced which exhibits, as a structure, undoubted continuity from the days of heathendom.

From the site we went on to consider the church fabric. It was seen that some of the earliest churches were raised during periods when the community thought it wise to plan buildings adapted both for defence and worship. The truth of this

proposition will, by most students, be deemed to have been satisfactorily proved. The part of the building specially designed for protection was the steeple, which was frequently, by turns, conning tower, beacon, treasure-chamber, and fortress. Touching this ancient use, folk-tales have the true ring.

As the centuries passed away, defensive towers became unnecessary, yet the idea survived in slight architectural features, now meaningless, unless interpreted by the light of history. The nave, however, continued to have its social value for several hundred years. Partly owing to the Reformation of the sixteenth century, partly in consequence of the pressure of population and the subsequent provision of more suitable buildings for secular purposes, even the nave was at last forbidden to the trader and the religious dramatist. Only a few trivial vestiges, such as the affixing of public notices on the church door, remain to tell of the old latitude given to customs, almost all traces of which have vanished from the memory of the common folk. We must except from this oblivion the village chatter about Cromwell's soldiers stabling their horses in the nave, the gossip about dog-whippers and dicing, and the numerous bits of scandal coming down from the less creditable periods of church history. All of these stories possess a germ of reality. With respect, however, to the current explanations of "lepers' windows," squints, "priests' chambers," and deflected chancels, there is no direct tradition, these explanations having been obtained from outside sources.

Again, with regard to the orientation of churches, the reasons given by country folk are obviously hearsay presentations of what has been taught by educated persons. We have, it is true, the records of ecclesiological writers to aid us, but these are, unfortunately, rather contradictory. Priest and architect seem to have conspired to keep any actual details of tradition to themselves, supposing, indeed, that any precise canons ever existed. This select corporation may have handed down the theory and the practice, but the rite is now shorn of much ceremonial, and the custom is followed almost blindly. Moreover, modern builders appear to be very careless in their alinements. The staple rudimentary idea of orientation is

clearly pagan, and the broad general tradition of sun-alinements must have been well kept during the early centuries of church-building, whether any definite, exact rules as to seasonal alinement were observed or not. If the orientation of modern churches is settled in a somewhat haphazard manner by the builders, and if the primitive idea has become blurred and indefinite, the orientation of graves affords a splendid example of unconscious folk-memory. Not only a sexton, but probably any villager chosen at random, would take into account the East-and-West direction in digging a grave, though he might not be able to assign a reason for his method. The primitive purpose has long since been driven aside by the force of events, and even the symbolists have had to introduce secondary explanations.

In burial customs, with their numerous little superstitious observances, the survival of folk-memory is well displayed. It is needless to repeat the evidence here—how, in recent years, objects have been surreptitiously, and even openly, buried with the dead; how the funeral feast, in an attenuated form, lingers on; how we still scrupulously don the funeral garb, once the sign of deprecation or fear; how graveyard teeth are used as charms and remedies. True, the underlying ideas have much altered; witness, for instance, the modern reasons put forward to justify the wearing of mourning; but so far as the practices are affected, we are still living, though, of course, unavowedly, in the Neolithic period. The superstitions relating to death cannot be expelled from the uneducated mind, which realizes too well that the event itself is inescapable. Hence the prejudice against cremation, stubbornly defying enlightened opinion, and hence the stories of ghosts and apparitions furtively believed in by many persons who would be ashamed to admit such credulity.

The folk-memory connected with the points of the compass supplied us with some curious little touches of local superstition, and with the familiar objection to burial on the North side of the churchyard—an inherited antipathy coming down from prehistoric times. Next, the churchyard yew presented a complicated problem. During the eighteenth century there

appears to have existed an echo of the days when the churchyard yew was pruned for purposes of archery. In the few instances where traditions concerning archery are still extant, there is a strong suspicion that folk-memory has been "assisted" by local writers and rambling antiquaries. Indeed, the strange silence about the yew in genuine popular legend is so complete as to be amazing. One does not refer to accounts of the employment of the yew on Palm Sunday, and other similar observances; at most, these are valid only as furnishing secondary motives. The real puzzle remains. Here we have a graveyard tree, possessing strong distinctive characters—sombreness, strength, longevity, perpetual verdure—appealing eloquently to human sentiment. The planting of the tree was a custom in the early days of British Christianity, and the practice has never become obsolete. Individual trees, when decayed or uprooted, have been replaced by fresh ones. In face of the cumulative testimony we cannot believe that the choice of the yew, like that of the elm or ash, was merely casual; yet most of the trustworthy tradition respecting the tree has long since disappeared in a most extraordinary manner.

Rapidly passing on, we recall the chapter relating to the horse-cult. Neglecting the minor details, we observe, in the obstinate prejudice against eating horseflesh, a reversal of prehistoric ideas. Here, at least, the Church made little admitted compromise, though the pagan habit died hard, and backslidings are recorded. Strange to say, few persons could give a reason, except that derived from the Jewish law, for the general repugnance. On broad grounds, we should have expected to find some curious, inconsequent explanation, such as that involved in the superstitious fear of killing robins and swallows, or of eating certain kinds of fish. There could scarcely be any rooted distaste for horseflesh, nor natural repulsion to so clean an animal. Yet the original ecclesiastical ban has lingered long after its actual effective force has been lost. Perhaps a partial explanation is found in the fact that we have always had numerous other domestic animals which have furnished us with flesh food, though the native stores have had to be supplemented by importation.

While folk-memory has sub-consciously kept alive the antipathy to horseflesh, the story of the working ox supplies us with an excellent illustration of the direct failure of oral tradition. The use of the bullock as a beast of draught constituted an economic question simply. So soon as the immediate material advantage was removed, owing to the disuse of ox-labour, all interest in keeping up the tradition was lost. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to get sound information respecting a custom so recently abandoned, and not one person in a hundred has ever seen an ox-shoe. Had the ox been pre-eminently connected with British and Early Teutonic sacrifices and superstitions, as was the horse, we should almost certainly have inherited a number of vagrant traditions. As it is, we possess but a few old ballads, legends, and nursery rhymes, like that of the Dun Cow of Warwick, or the cow that jumped over the moon.

The study of the ox, indeed, helps us to appreciate exactly where the strength and the weakness of folk-memory lie. Roughly speaking, the soundest traditions are concerned either with essential details of urgent social economy, or with religion and superstition. In these matters, oral transmission is usually faithful. "This story shall the good man teach his son." But let an industrial practice be dropped, through its being no longer necessary or profitable, and a few decades will wipe out all direct remembrance. The most stupid myths will arise to account for this or that visible relic of the industry or custom. So long as the occupation brings material gain, the tradition is scrupulously passed on from father to son. Of superstition, or of widely-felt fears, affecting both body and spirit, there is the same careful transmission and the same vivid retention. Scenes of horror also remain long in the memory of the people; hence we meet with traditions of battles, massacres, raids, burnings. Just in proportion as the historical facts grow tenuous, the accounts become distorted and exaggerated, as, for instance, in the Irish legends about Cromwell. There are minor divisions of each series, such as those which comprise the stories about buried treasure, ghosts and "barguests," omens and amulets, together with superstitions respecting personal

characteristics, times and seasons, health and disease, with many other matters.

Viewing broadly the tract occupied by folk-memory, we indeed find certain stable elements. We see the peasantry, diminishing numerically, but still forming a great multitude, slow-moving by nature, and tenacious of their heritage of folk-lore. The dull, mechanical monotony of the lives of many of the industrial classes, again, tends to check any breaking away from tradition. Our educational system is, alas, still so uniform as to put a curb on originality, hence there is a tendency for ideas to keep their traditional set. Opposed to these conservative factors, there is at work a well-known biological principle. As our society—to use the Spencerian phrase—is being slowly transformed from a state of homogeneity to one of heterogeneity, as the individual becomes separated and specialized from the mass, the habit of acting instinctively like blind units of the human crowd is slowly lost, while race-memory is weakened, and the primitive faculty of unconsciously preserving and transmitting unwritten lore becomes atrophied and almost worthless.

Even the wofully scanty records of folk-memory such as those which we have noticed, are destined soon to disappear. Education, in spite of its cramped conditions, is destroying many foolish beliefs and baneful superstitions. But it is doing more than this; for the printed book and the daily newspaper not only obliterate folk-memory, but remove the need for its lawful exercise. The reader no longer relies on oral tradition, but on the printed pages of history and on works of reference. Scarcely can we tell whether an important event took place five years ago, or a dozen years ago. The speech and actions of famous men become confused in popular tradition—always there is some book wherein the record is kept. A credulous antiquary may proclaim that a certain mound is a barrow, and though the "barrow" was actually raised within the past twenty years, few folk can come forward to gainsay the statement. Or some old shepherd "believes" that he has used flint celts for bell-clappers, whereas it is more likely that he has merely heard, or read, of such a practice. In fact, we

are swiftly approaching the time when folk-custom and folk-memory will be so utterly vitiated by books and lectures as to be worthless. Caution is especially necessary at the present day. In his address to the British Association in 1910, Mr W. Crooke gave a timely warning respecting the "half-trained amateur." Such a person, visiting India, "may see a totem in every hedge, or expect to meet a corn-spirit on every threshing floor." And, at home, the rash enthusiast may see an idol in every stone heap, an Iberian in every dark-haired man, a symbol in every line of an ancient building, a prehistoric grave in every stray bit of potsherd.

There is, however, a middle course of action. And, though folk-memory is waning, there is work which can be done, if it be done quickly. There are still waifs and strays of custom to be collected and correlated. Every village clergyman has his parish registers, which, though unfortunately not reaching back so far as one could wish, may yet give information on some of the topics which we have studied. The local antiquary who will make a precise record of all discoveries which connect the present with the past, will do great service. The muniment room, with its deeds and charters, sometimes yields us timely help. The old chest, with its wills, leases, and covenants, may, in a few scattered sentences, throw light on some quaint custom. The ballads and folk-songs, which are now being so sedulously collected and studied, still safeguard many curious fancies and superstitions. All these sources will gradually yield less and less to the searcher. It is true that there are libraries full of volumes which treat of antiquities, folk-customs, and folk-lore, but the details need to be carefully re-arranged, and, in many instances, to be re-vivified by comparison with the living present.

ADDENDA

Page 9. *Churches on Roman foundations.* The piers of the chancel arch of Bosham church, Sussex, rest on enormous square bases, which are believed to be Roman. The capitals were also probably copied from Roman models. Mr P. M. Johnston, F.S.A., in *Victoria Hist. of Sussex*, 1907, II. p. 362, suggests that the work represents "possibly the triumphal arch of Vespasian's basilica." Roman relics have been found under the floor of this pre-Conquest church.

St Michael's church, St Albans, retains much Roman material in its walls and piers.

Since this chapter went to press, I have read Mr Montagu Sharpe's *Parish Churches on Romano-British Sites*, 1909, in which evidence is adduced to show that many of our parish churches occupy the sites of pagan rural chapels (*sacella*) and are closely associated with the lines of centuriation as planned by Roman surveyors. The sacellum was a small unroofed place consecrated to a deity (p. 4), containing an altar, and sometimes a shrine (*aedicula*). The sacellum was also used for non-religious purposes, e.g. as a place of refreshment. Mr Sharpe states that the Roman surveyors divided a district into areas or "blocks" by means of four public ways (*viae vicinales*). In the canton of the London Civitas a side of such a square measured $1\frac{1}{8}$ miles (p. 2). Maps are given, one of which shows that 30 parish churches of the Isle of Wight "had intimate connection with the lines of the Roman Survey" (p. 3). Such churches are especially found near cross-roads.

Mr John Ward's *The Roman Era in Britain*, 1911, pp. 111–113, deserves notice in this connection, especially with regard to the conflict between the historical evidence and the "comparative silence of archaeology."

Page 14. *Classification of earthworks.* A portion of the scheme is appended, in order to explain the groups of earthworks to which reference is made.

A. Promontory fortresses: partly inaccessible, on account of cliffs or water, partly defended by artificial walls or banks.

B. Hill- or Contour-forts: fortresses situated on hill-tops, with artificial defences following the natural line of the hill.

C. Rectangular, or other simple enclosures, including forts and towns of the Romano-British kind.

D. Castle mounts: forts consisting of a mount, with an encircling ditch or fosse.

E. Castle mounts with baileys: fortified mounts wholly or partly artificial, having an attendant court or bailey.

Page 118. *Churches as fortresses.* The church of St Michael, Torrington, Devon, was employed by the Royalists (1646), both as a prison and a powder magazine. Owing to an explosion, probably accidental, the church was blown up, and about 200 prisoners were killed.

The town referred to by Thorold Rogers seems to be Alton.

Page 161. *Arms taken to church.* A few of the old oak seats in Clovelly church, Devon, are notched, and it has been supposed that the purpose was the accommodation of weapons. In one case there is a corresponding hole in the floor, rectangular in shape, which may have been intended to receive the butt end of a musket (cf. the stands in City churches for holding the sword of the Lord Mayor).

Respecting the rating of the clergy for armour, see *Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., IV. p. 468.

Page 167. *The Borsholder.* The powers of this official are enumerated in William Lambard's work, *The Duties of Constables, Borsholders, Tythingmen, and such other lowe Ministers of the peace* (1583), pp. 15, 16, 20, etc.

Page 201. *Objects in churches.* An enormous pole was formerly suspended in a horizontal position in the nave of Bosham church, Sussex. It was traditionally said to be the staff of a Mediaeval giant, Sir Bevis of Southampton, who was accustomed to stride across Bosham Harbour at one step, on his way to Southampton (K. H. MacDermott, *The Story of Bosham church, Sussex*, 1906, pp. 14–15). For a list of curiosities formerly preserved in pagan temples, see J. Beckmann's *History of Inventions, Discoveries, and Origins*, trans. by W. Johnston, 1846, I. pp. 283–4.

Page 344. *Plan of churchyards.* Additional examples of churches which have little space on the North side: West Tarring, Sussex; Northam and Clovelly, Devon; Hambledon, Surrey. Small South yards: Ferring and Lyminster, Sussex.

Page 346. *Introduction of headstones.* It is asserted that the churchyard of Grasmere, Westmoreland, was devoid of gravestones until the early part of the nineteenth century, and was used as the playground of the village school. Wordsworth thus refers to the churchyard in *The Brothers*:

> "An orphan could not find his mother's grave;
> Here's neither head nor footstone, plate of brass,
> Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state
> Nor emblem of our hopes: the dead man's home
> Is but a fellow to that pasture-field."

Page 405. *Tennyson and the yew.* Two other lines from the same poem (*In Memoriam*, XXXIX. *vv.* 1, 2) deserve notice:

> "Dark yew, that graspest at the stones
> And dippest toward the dreamless head."

These lines suggest the Breton superstition that the yew sends out a root into the mouths of the dead.

Page 412. *Drawings of the horse.* Sketches of hog-maned horses, bearing signs of halters, have recently been discovered in the Magdalenian caves of North Spain.

Page 440. *Superstitions respecting the horse.* In Bavaria, it was formerly the custom for horses to be taken to church once every year, to peep at the altar or the effigy of the local saint. This observance was supposed to ensure good health to the animals during the next twelvemonth. (*Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., III. p. 266, authority cited.) The practice is still followed in Italy.

In our own country, horses were taken at Easter into the "middle" of Hertfordshire churches to be blessed. (*Notes and Queries*, 11th Ser., III. p. 318.)

Page 460. *Curved ridges due to plough-teams of oxen.* The curvature indicative of ancient tillage generally takes the form of a flat reversed S; in other words the unwieldy team turned to the left when approaching the headland. Mr T. Blashill (*Jour. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, N.S., II. pp. 218–23) deduces that the old-fashioned heavy ploughs turned the furrow-slice to the left. This is not, however, a necessary conclusion. A reversed S-curve might be associated with a right-handed mould-board. Moreover, Dr W. Fream (*Elements of Agriculture*, 1892, p. 45) asserts that "none of the old ploughs turned a furrow"; they stirred the earth but did not turn it over. In such a conservative occupation as agriculture, one would scarcely expect to find such a revolution as Mr Blashill postulates. He observes that modern ploughs are so made that the furrow-slice is thrown to the right, and the team also turns in that direction at the headland. A similar feature is noticeable in old cultivation ridges in many parts of the Continent, where the curve is more frequently that of a flat S, not reversed. It should be remembered that the old turnwrest plough, formerly employed in some parts of England, enabled the ploughman to throw the furrow either way.

The "line of beauty" traced by old ploughs is alluded to by William Mason, in his *English Garden*, Bk II., ll. 51–6 (Vol. I. of *Works*, 1811, p. 237). He is referring to "ploughing steers":

> "That peculiar curve,
> Alike averse to crooked and to straight
> Where sweet Simplicity resides; which Grace
> And Beauty call their own; whose lambent flow
> Charms us at once with symmetry and ease;
> 'Tis Nature's curve..."

To prevent overstatement respecting the connection between ox-teams and the curved furrow, it should be added that formerly there was "a prejudice, if not a superstition, in favour of crooked ridges" (W. L. Rham, *Dict. of the Farm*, 1858, p. 291).

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